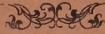


School of Theology at Claremont



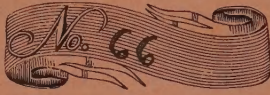
1001 1385555



PRIVATE LIBRARY

— OF —

THOMAS J. POPE.



*Will*

PLEASE RETURN PROMPTLY.



The Library

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY  
AT CLAREMONT

WEST FOOTHILL AT COLLEGE AVENUE  
CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA



BA

33

LIBRARY  
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SCHOOL  
OF THEOLOGY  
817 West 34th Street  
Los Angeles 7, Calif.

LIBRARY  
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SCHOOL  
OF THEOLOGY  
817 West 34th Street  
Los Angeles 2, Calif.









---

THE HARMONY  
OF  
THE DIVINE DISPENSATIONS.

---





20  
29  
356

THE HARMONY  
OF  
THE DIVINE DISPENSATIONS :

BEING  
A Series of Discourses

ON  
SELECT PORTIONS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE,  
DESIGNED TO SHOW THE  
SPIRITUALITY, EFFICACY, AND HARMONY OF THE DIVINE  
REVELATIONS MADE TO MANKIND FROM THE BEGINNING.

With Notes Critical, Historical, and Explanatory.

BY GEORGE SMITH, F.A.S.,

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY, OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE,  
FELLOW OF THE GENEALOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY, ETC., ETC.

It is a duty we owe to God, as the Fountain and Author of all truth, who is truth itself; and it is a duty also we owe our own selves; if we will deal candidly and sincerely with other souls, to have our minds constantly disposed to entertain and receive truth wheresoever we meet with it, or under whatsoever appearance of plain, or ordinary, strange, new, or perhaps displeasing, it may come in our way.—LOCKE.

THIRD EDITION.

New-York:

PUBLISHED BY CARLTON & PORTER,

200 MULBERRY-STREET.

Theology Library  
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY  
AT CLAREMONT  
California



## INTRODUCTION.

---

THE author of the following work has acquired an honorable rank among the writers of our own denomination, both in England and America. Though residing at a distance from the advantages of the metropolis, being connected with the mining business of Cornwall, he first attracted attention by his scientific attainments, particularly in the departments connected with his practical pursuits. But it is by his religious publications that he has performed a nobler service, and obtained a more extended reputation. His works in this department have received high commendations from the English press, and upon republication in this country have assumed a standard position.

When we add that he is a member and a local preacher of the British Wesleyan Connection, it may be a matter of surprise that he should apologize for the "sermonical" character of the present volume. But let it be understood that in England the local preacher is not only no itinerant or pastor, but he is not an ordained administrator, a reverend, or a minister; he is simply a layman, licensed to officiate in the pulpit—a lay preacher. Yet to the honor of that class of preach-

A4006

ing laity it must be said, that they are a most efficient part of the British Wesleyan system, and have furnished the Church and the world a Samuel Drew and a George Smith.

The following work is among the best of his publications. It will be found intelligible and attractive to our laity, and of no little use to our ministry. It presents in a most striking clearness the fact of the *oneness* of the redemptive system. It shows that "Christianity is as old as the creation." It presents the three-one dispensation as the grand spiritual Cosmos of which the Redeemer is the center. It thus serves to develop a true unity in the manifold parts of the revealed word, to give a comprehensive completeness to our view of the Divine system, to pour an explanatory light upon numerous otherwise dark passages of the Divine page, and, in fact, to furnish a volume of peculiar evidences to the truth and divinity of the sacred book.

D. D. W.

## P R E F A C E.

---

IN presenting these Discourses to the public, it may be necessary for the author to say a few words in the way of explanation and of apology.

In explanation of his design it may be observed, that he has for some time *desiderated* a more extensive and particular application of the improvements which have been recently made in Biblical science, and the discoveries which have so signally crowned the efforts of Rawlinson, Layard, Botta, and others, in the East, to the elucidation of Holy Scripture. Not that he has any sympathy with the advocates of a progressive theology, who wish to inculcate the opinion that the researches of science and the revelations of philosophy will, eventually, present to the world means of religious knowledge and experience, far beyond all that was realized by the Apostles of our Saviour, and the other early confessors of our holy faith. On the contrary, he is fully prepared to maintain, that we have in the Holy Scriptures a glorious and complete revelation of Divine truth, and that nothing more, of equal character and authority, will be accessible to man, even to the end of the world. And further, as the means by which the

human mind obtains a knowledge of God, and the experience of salvation through this truth, are the illumination of the Holy Spirit, by simple faith in Jesus Christ; so the way to the attainment of the Divine favor and to continued progress in holiness must remain essentially the same, from the day of Pentecost to the end of time. The author regards the assertion of these sentiments as necessary and important. He neither expects nor hopes for any new light to supersede, or to supplement, the truth of God's holy word; he looks to the Holy Ghost as the only efficient and abiding agent, by whose mighty operation in the mind of man this Divine truth becomes the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

The assertion of these great principles is, however, in his judgment, in perfect harmony with the most earnest desire to lay hold of every means which science, philosophy, philology, or modern discovery may offer toward the elucidation of the sacred Scriptures. This Divine word alludes to doctrines promulgated, and to institutions appointed, in the infancy of the world; and speaks of kingdoms and powers which arose into existence and influence when the primitive revelations of God to man must have been distinctly remembered, and before the original institutions of religion, however they might have been corrupted, could have altogether disappeared. As further discoveries are made respecting the history, institutions, and antiquities of these primitive nations, increasing light may be cast on our most ancient Scriptures; and thus the Patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations may be more



clearly understood in their rites, usages, and typical character. And, as this most desirable object is attained, a means will be provided for showing in a clearer light the unity of the great scheme of redemption, or, in other words, the harmony of the dispensations of grace. The present work is offered to the Christian Church as an humble contribution toward this important object. How far the author has succeeded in his aim, is submitted to the candid judgment of the Christian reader. He will only briefly allude to the manner in which he has endeavored to accomplish his purpose.

Each discourse is founded on an important portion of Holy Scripture. The letter and the subject of the text are illustrated by all the means which he could command, from ancient history, antiquarian research, oriental discovery, and philological investigation. And the sense thus elicited is applied to the exposition of the great economy of grace, both in respect to the harmony of the manifestations of Divine truth to mankind in all ages, and to the operation of saving grace in the hearts of individual Christians.

Perhaps some readers will regard the sermonic appearance of this work as strangely out of place, proceeding as it does from the pen of a laymen. If any apology is necessary on this account, the author most earnestly assures the reader, that neither in the pulpit nor by the press does he make any pretensions whatever to the character or *status* of a Christian minister. Nothing, indeed, has given him more painful surprise than that learned, pious, and eminent Christian laymen should have evinced a disposition to break down a most

important and essential distinction, introduced by an ordinance of Christ into the Christian Church.

Yet, while uncalled by God or his Church to separate himself from the ordinary avocations of life, he feels himself entirely acquitted of every thought and feeling of this kind, he, nevertheless, fully claims the Christian liberty of endeavoring to be useful to his fellow-men, according to the established usages of that section of the Christian Church with which he is connected, and of sending forth, from time to time, through the press into the world, such contributions to the cause of truth and advancing holiness as he may be enabled to provide.

On one important point the author can express himself with the fullest confidence: this little work is not written for any party or sectarian object or purpose. It has been the design of the writer throughout to exhibit Scriptural truth without adulteration or reserve, and to show forth the infinite mercy of God in Christ to all ages of a sinful and guilty world.

TREVU, CAMBORNE,

*May 8, 1856.*

# CONTENTS.

---

## DISCOURSE I.

### REDEMPTION PROMISED.

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.—  
GENESIS iii, 15.....Page 15

## DISCOURSE II.

### THE WAY OF LIFE, THROUGH REDEMPTION, OPENED.

Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them. And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.—GENESIS iii, 21-24. .... 36

## DISCOURSE III.

### THE MEDIATORIAL WAY OF ACCESS TO GOD.

And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee. And thou shalt make a mercy-seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubim of gold; of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy-seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even of the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubim on the two ends thereof. And the cherubim shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy-seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony.—EXODUS xxv, 16-22..... 66

## DISCOURSE IV.

## THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID.

In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.—Amos ix, 11.....PAGE 103

## DISCOURSE V.

CHRIST ON THE PROPITIATORY BETWEEN THE LIVING  
CHERUBIM.

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.—ISAIAH vi, 1-7..... 137

## DISCOURSE VI.

## THE LIKENESS OF A MAN UPON THE THRONE.

And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.—EZEKIEL i, 26..... 171

## DISCOURSE VII.

## THE SON OF GOD IN THE FIERY FURNACE.

Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt: and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.—DANIEL iii, 25..... 205

## DISCOURSE VIII.

## PARADISE REGAINED.

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.—LUKE xxiii, 43..... 230

## DISCOURSE IX.

## REDEMPTION CONSUMMATED.

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.—REVELATION ii, 7..... 257



# THE HARMONY

OF

## THE DIVINE DISPENSATIONS.

---

### DISCOURSE I.

#### REDEMPTION PROMISED.

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.—GENESIS iii, 15.

THE circumstances with which this portion of divine truth stands connected are without a parallel in the history of our race.

Man had been created by God in a state of purity and holiness, had been placed in the Garden of Eden, “to dress and to keep it,” and had received from his Maker a female companion of the same nature with himself, and fully qualified to contribute to his happiness and peace.

It does not appear easy to overrate the dignity and felicity of the first pair; for, while they continued in their state of innocence, they walked and lived in intimate communion with the Lord. Free from all impure thought and feeling, from all irregularity of passion and affection, guided by the highest and most enlightened reason, and, above all, spiritually united to God, as the source of their being and the fountain of their happiness, their enjoyment was without alloy, their elevation and blessedness complete.

But, alas! before the delivery of our text, all this happiness had passed away. Seduced from her obedience by the malice

and guile of the old serpent, the devil, the woman had been deceived, and had eaten of the fruit of that tree of which God had said: "Thou shalt not eat of it." Adam had followed the example of his wife; and we now find the seducer and the seduced standing before God, to receive that judgment which their sins had called forth. The words of the text are a part of the sentence pronounced on the serpent. (See *Appendix*, note 1.)

When we endeavor to stretch our minds to a comprehension of the boundless dishonor to God, and degradation and misery to man, which resulted from the success of Satanic malice and guile in this temptation, we need not wonder that the almighty Judge should, in his address to the great destroyer, threaten the punishment of his rebellion and the destruction of his power. But human sagacity would never have thought, that, at this moment, when the guilty pair stood before God, tremblingly awaiting their doom, even his mercy would then have opened up to them the means by which their deliverance from ruin, as well as the final and complete defeat of their adversary, was to be effected. Yet so it was. Before even the sentence which their sin had merited was pronounced on the terrified criminals, they heard, in the judgment of the great enemy, a brief exposition of the mode by which their redemption, and that of the whole race, was to be effected.

We have this remarkable display of grace presented to our attention in the terms of our text. In considering these words, we feel shut up to the communication which they make. We know that Adam had previous intercourse with God; but we do not know the nature and extent of the religious revelations which were thus made to him. We are sure, that, with his intellectual powers free from the perverting bias of sin, he must have been adapted, beyond his most favored sons, to infer, from the facts which came to his knowledge, and the truths revealed to his mind, the purposes and will of God, and their effects on the condition and destiny of man. But, as we

are not informed of the nature or extent of these facts and truths, we cannot estimate the result obtained by the first pair through their reasoning on them, any further than this is made known to us by collateral circumstances. While, then, we are ignorant of the extent of the religious knowledge which the first pair possessed, we do know that they had various and important means of obtaining information on spiritual and Divine subjects.

When, therefore, the question arises, which naturally suggests itself to every reflecting and religious mind on perusing the words of our text, namely, To what extent did Adam and his wife apprehend the true spiritual import of this revelation? we meet with an inquiry which appears extremely dark and difficult. Yet it becomes our first duty to attempt a solution of this important question.

It will readily be conceded, that the occasion on which these words were delivered, was one of the deepest solemnity; that the truths which they revealed were replete with momentous importance; and that they were as applicable, and as full of personal interest, to the man and woman who heard these sounds proceed from the Word of the Lord, as they can ever be to any of their remote descendants. Surely, then, these words must have been intended to be understood by the persons who heard them. More than this, it seems sufficiently evident that this judgment on the serpent was uttered for the sake of mankind. It cannot be thought that the communication was made merely for the purpose of giving information to Satan. When, therefore, Adam heard the words of our text, in connection with his own sentence and that of his wife, what was the sense which they conveyed to his mind?

In proceeding to answer this question, there are several considerations which merit serious attention.

1. We must avoid the usual error of supposing Adam to be ignorant of all those matters and things of which he had no actual experience. Learned and good men have fallen into

great errors through this notion. In discussing subjects of this kind, we are constantly met by the inquiry, "How can you suppose Adam to have known this or that, when, in his circumstances, he could have no need of such knowledge, nor the possibility of using it?" Why, have not every one of us the knowledge of a thousand things which, in our individual circumstances, we cannot use? It is not necessary to reason out this matter: a single passage in the brief history which Moses has recorded of those days, ought to be sufficient to dissipate this delusion.

We are told, that, when Eve was presented to Adam, he immediately knew her origin, and hailed her as "bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." As, during the formation of Eve, the Lord had "caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam," it is not clear by what means he obtained this knowledge. But this is not the most remarkable part of the case. Not only did Adam know the manner of the woman's formation, and her consequent identity of nature and substance with himself, but he proceeded to say: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." On the principle objected to above, how could Adam know anything of the parental relation? There had then never been a child; yet Adam not only knew the manner in which the human family would be multiplied, but he knew also the feelings of love and respect with which children would naturally regard their parents. Nor was his acquaintance with these feelings partial or imperfect. He knew the whole case so fully, that he could poise all the love and respect of the son against the power of conjugal love and tenderness, and, from the immense preponderance of the latter, elicit the grand natural law: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife;" a law which was distinctly recognized by our Redeemer, and which, in fact, has given *families* to the world.

Now we ask, Whence did the first man obtain this knowl-



edge? Certainly not by experience, and consequently either by an intuitive power with which his Maker had invested him, or by direct revelation from God. Whichever way it was, it is clear that the power which enabled him to apprehend these truths, and thence, by rational induction, to elicit natural laws which are still in operation, and will continue to the end of the world, was surely sufficient to enable him to understand the full import of the words of our text. If, therefore, we are not at liberty to assume that the first man did certainly possess this knowledge, we are surely bound to give fair and full weight to those facts which seem to indicate its existence.

2. It will appear probable that Adam, in his state of innocence, had been favored with many revelations from God. It is to be observed, that the Divine Person who pronounced this sentence on the criminals, was not only no stranger to the first pair, but seems to have been most intimately known to them. How was his approach first apprehended by the alarmed criminals? Not by sight, but by hearing. "They heard the voice of the Lord walking in the garden in the cool of the day." It must not be supposed, from this language, that they heard words spoken. It was not the sound of *words*, but of *walking*, that was heard. And the distinct specification of the time is peculiarly significant: "in the cool," or evening, "of the day." Was it then the custom of the "Word of the Lord" to meet this happy pair every evening before the tree of life, there to invigorate their bodies with its sacramental fruit, and to strengthen their souls by revelations of heavenly truth? We cannot be sure of this, although the surmise seems neither far-fetched nor improbable. For when the evening came, and they heard the sound of walking, they at once knew whose footstep it was, and in their guilt and shame, fearing to meet the Divine Presence, they hid themselves. How could this have been, if this was the first appearance of the Divine Word; if, indeed, his presence in human form had not been

made so familiar to them, that they certainly knew his approach by the sound of his tread.—(See *Appendix*, note 2.)

3. The fallen pair must have apprehended the real nature and extent of their loss and danger, from their feelings and fears. They did not, as we have seen, dare to stand before God, but hid themselves among the trees of the garden. The sorrow and humiliation to which the woman was doomed; and the sentence pronounced on the man, to obtain subsistence for his family from the ground, now burdened with the malediction of heaven; and the subjection of both to labor, and sorrow, and death, until they should again mingle with the dust of the ground from whence they were taken; all this they knew. They were also well acquainted with the Divine majesty and power of Him by whom this judgment was given. The words of the text could not, therefore, have been regarded by them as unmeaning or indefinite terms, but as a communication which presented to them a way of deliverance from the fearful and mighty evils to which they had been subjected, and as promising the entire defeat of that malice, craft, and power by which they had been ruined. Why, then, might not a mind so great in intellect, and so fully enlightened, as that of Adam, have seen in these words the promise of an incarnate Redeemer, for the salvation of man, and the destruction of Satan's work, by his sufferings, and the triumphant manifestation of his mighty power?

4. That Adam did thus understand these words, may be inferred from what took place immediately afterward. The judgment had been pronounced. Man, who before had been innocent, was now guilty. He who had lived in the garden of God was to be cast upon a soil on which the curse of God rested. That nature, which had drawn immortality from the tree of life, was now destined to death, corruption, and dust. The immediate cause of all this vast amount of evil to Adam was his wife. She had eaten of the fruit; she had given it to

her husband. It was through her that he had been drawn into all this abyss of disgrace, danger, sorrow, and death. And yet, in these circumstances, and at this moment, how is the mind of Adam employed? There is no doubt that he looked back on the past, realized his present sad condition, and cast his piercing eye into the future. But, amid all these conflicting and crushing emotions, one thought predominates, one feeling prevails. And it would seem as if he threw himself into the midst of his Judge's operations, in order to carry out, on the instant, the purpose which filled his mind. This was, to give his wife a new name. He had previously given her a name which indicated her nature and sex, "woman," the female of the human race. This name fully met the case in respect to every natural and temporal distinction. But after the fall, and when the sentence had been passed on the culprits, Adam, in this earnest, urgent, and apparently untimely manner, proceeds to give her a new name. Why is this? And what was the name? Was Adam anxious to brand his wife with a perpetual memento of her fault? Did he seek to associate her with an imperishable badge of her weakness and sin? No: "He called his wife's name *Life*, because she was to be the mother of all living," or "of all the living." How was this? She who had introduced death called "the mother of life!" Yes, and here is the solution of the difficulty. Prior to this, life had been the portion of humanity. Now they had been adjudged to death, and life for all could only emanate from the seed of the woman, who was destined to crush the serpent's head. (See *Appendix*, note 3.)

Nothing can more clearly display Adam's correct apprehension of the meaning of this primitive promise of redemption, than does this act. Had he been ignorant of the spiritual and ultimate import of the promise, he could not at such a time have given his wife this name. This fact is an equally clear proof of Adam's faith in this gracious promise. He not only understood, but believed the Divine word. He admitted

the validity of the sentence which had been passed on him. He acknowledged himself and all the race to be dead, and saw, in the Seed of the woman, the only means of restoration to life. And therefore he immediately grasps the promise, and gives his wife a name which would, in every hour of his future existence, afford him an unfailing pledge of certain redemption.

5. But there is reason to believe, not only that Adam and his wife fully understood these words as teaching them the certainty of a glorious redemption through the triumphs of a suffering Saviour, but also that this Saviour would be more than man. On one point there appears to have been great obscurity in their views, namely, the time when this redemption would take place. To this the words of the text make no allusion whatever. Nor is it probable that any idea of the vast period interposing between the delivery of the promise and the period of its accomplishment, had entered into the mind of Adam or of his wife.

Both these points seem very clearly proved by the language used by Eve on the birth of her first-born. The words, as rendered in our authorized version, are, "I have gotten a man from the Lord." (See *Appendix*, note 4.) But the original does not convey this sense. It is literally, "I have gotten a man—the Jehovah." Can any doubt be entertained as to the meaning of Eve in this language? The word of promise had assured her, that the fearful consequences of the great transgression should be met and canceled by the Seed of the woman. Persons so enlightened as the first pair are proved to have been, could not have supposed that these glorious results could have been accomplished by mere mortal means. Adam knew that Eve was to be the mother of children when she was first presented to him; but he did not then call her "the mother of the living." Full of hope, ardent with expectation, Eve, on the birth of her first-born, thought the great promise of redemption had been verified, that the incarnate Son had



come: she therefore exclaimed, "I have gotten a man, the Lord." This was the interpretation put on these words in all antiquity, and it has been maintained by the best scholars to the present day.

From all this we learn, that the first pair had an intelligent apprehension of the promise of redemption. And this supposition accounts for the submission, and even content, which the general tenor of the sacred narrative ascribes to Adam and his wife. The loss of innocence, of immortal life, of the Divine favor, of Paradise, and the tree of life; the consciousness of guilt, the prospect of death, the consequences of sin on their temporal condition, and on their state of mind; all this loss, and these inflictions, would be too much for human nature to sustain, unsupported by the strong consolation which the hope of redemption could alone afford. To suppose Adam and his wife, therefore, ignorant of the meaning of these words, in their true and proper sense, is to place the first human family in a state of hopeless, helpless, unmitigated wretchedness.

The views which have been thus put forth, acquire increased probability and force from a careful consideration of the import of the words before us, which describe the decisive struggle between the destroyer and the Redeemer. "It shall bruise thy head." Brief as are these terms, can any language be more full or explicit? Satan had triumphed by subtilty, deceit, and guile. His victory over the human pair seemed a triumph of the evil one over the purpose of God. The Lord had made man happy and holy, beautiful and glorious; but the devil had spoiled this divine workmanship, had left him with his soul depraved and guilty, and his body doomed to the dust. And all this was done, not by any physical violence, but by craft and lying persuasion. The head, the seat and center of this malign power, is here doomed to destruction. "It shall bruise thy head." If man had at this time received a promise that he should be endued with strength to resist all

the future aggressions of Satan, it would have been a great boon. But that the dominion of the arch-deceiver, who had triumphed over him when in his best estate, and had brought him into complete subjection to his power, should be broken, that his power should be destroyed, and his utmost intellectual energy crushed by the Seed of the woman, is truly wonderful.

“It shall bruise thy head.” These words must, therefore, have conveyed this sense—that the advantage which Satan had obtained over human nature should be reversed; that, from being the conqueror, he should be the conquered. They clearly taught our first parents, that, so far from having defeated the benevolent purpose of God by his first and greatest achievement over human nature, the resources of Heaven’s wisdom and goodness instantly met the case, and provided a way of deliverance for the lost, and a means of punishment for the tempter. Yes, successful as Satan had been in seducing man into rebellion against God, he is seen here arraigned, convicted, and doomed to certain and complete ruin. As crushing the head of a serpent destroys its power and its life, so this great redemption scheme was designed and destined to break the power of the destroyer, to deliver his victim from his grasp, and gloriously to assert and to establish the supremacy of the infinite wisdom, power, and goodness of God.

This great end is declared to be certain. There is nothing contingent or problematical in these terms. “It *shall* bruise thy head.” The defeat of Satan; the frustration of his proud, daring, and malicious devices; the absolute destruction of his dominion, are placed beyond all doubt. The scheme of redemption is heralded into existence and operation by the authoritative declaration of God, that there is a power interposed between man and his destroyer, which shall avenge insulted justice, and crush the utmost effort and energy of Satan.

How consolatory to the sinning pair, in their painful circum-

stances, must have been this assurance ! Satan had thus far succeeded ; man lay prostrate in his grasp, when, lo ! the Word of God appears, admitting and condemning all this iniquity, dooming the seducer and the seduced to merited punishment, but making this grand distinction between them, namely, that while the latter have a promise of redemption, the former is assured of his certain and ultimate ruin. We have not now to speak of remedial means which the mercy of God provided for the human offenders, nor of further revelations of grace and truth, which were undoubtedly made to them about this time ; but one remark is necessary. Whatever of merciful interposition was vouchsafed, would certainly be regarded by them as, to some extent, means to this great end. God had placed before Adam and his wife, as an undoubted fact, certainly to be accomplished, the ruin of Satan's kingdom and power, and the glorious triumph of humanity over all his art and energy. This would hence be the pole-star of man's hope ; all revealed mercy and truth would stand associated with the fact, and thus call forth faith in God, and induce submission to the Divine will, and obedience to revealed law.

For, as an able author has observed, " the doctrines essential to salvation must have been preached to Adam, or he could not have believed in them ; and without a belief in them he could not have been saved. The conclusion is just, and the consequence necessary ; and if these had been withholden at any period, it would have been a fact quite irreconcilable with the proceedings of the Divine Government as revealed to us ; or the declaration of the Almighty : ' I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God.' This conclusion, therefore, necessarily remains, that all the knowledge essential to produce that faith, without which we cannot experience a death unto sin, was promulgated to our first parents the very day of their offense. The principles which operated under the former covenant had become weak and insufficient by reason

of transgression. To substitute new ones, suited to relieve and recover the sinner, was in the contemplation of Divine mercy. The concealment of this gracious intention could only take place in opposition to the principles of it, and of course to the exercise of those attributes displayed in the revelation of it; an act quite at variance with the inspired declaration, that 'He left not Himself without witness;' for, until this was made known, no witness of his grace and mercy could exist."—*Peers's Typical Instruction*, p. 84.

The means by which the great end in question was to be accomplished, would greatly enhance its encouraging and consolatory influence. It was the Seed of the woman that was to inflict ruin upon the destroyer. We must not, however, speak of this as it is fully and gloriously revealed in the Gospel, but rather as it was shadowed out to our first parents by these initial revelations. Taking this view, it seems certain that they would know from these words, that the Person who was, in the Divine purpose, destined to redeem man and to destroy the power of Satan, would be altogether extraordinary in his nature and character. It can hardly be conceived that they had a clear and full apprehension of the mystery of the incarnation; but there does not seem to be any reasonable doubt, that they had a full assurance that the Seed of the woman would, in some manner, unite the Divine and human natures in one person, for the destruction of Satan's power and the redemption of man.

It is quite improbable that Adam and his wife could have regarded the assumption of humanity by the Lord as impossible or unlikely. They had seen the Word of the Lord in human form, and had familiarly conversed with him. He even now stood before them in the same aspect, and it was the well-known sound of his footsteps which had made them afraid. And, further, it is a most remarkable fact, that the union of Deity with human nature was a most prevalent notion throughout all the nations of antiquity. In times long

anterior to the days of the Hebrew seers, the idea pervaded the history and mythology of the ancient world. (See *Appendix*, note 5.) Whence could such a notion have originated? It certainly is not easy to conceive that the mind of man should have excogitated such a strange conceit. Unparalleled by anything in nature, and so opposed to all the deductions of unassisted reason that by modern philosophers who reject Divine revelation, it has been pronounced impossible and absurd, how could such a notion have been not originated only, but actually disseminated so widely as to form a leading element in the religion and traditions of all the ancient Gentile nations? We confess we cannot conceive how this could have been occasioned, except these views pervaded the post-diluvian inhabitants of the world before the Dispersion, and were by that event disseminated among all the different nations. But, if such was the case, whence could the post-diluvian people have obtained the notion? We know no time so likely, nor any means of origination so probable, as that the fact of the union of the Divine and human natures was revealed to our first parents in connection with the circumstances we have now under consideration. This hypothesis fully accounts for the new name given by Adam to his wife, and for the exclamation of Eve on the birth of Cain. It is, indeed, required by, and forms a key to, all the more important difficulties connected with the subject before us, as well as to that peculiar and prevalent notion of which we have spoken as universal among ancient Gentile nations.

Our conclusion will be greatly confirmed by a consideration of another most important feature in the communication. The words before us not only speak of the superhuman work of a triumphant Redeemer; they also refer to his suffering as a necessary element in his great redeeming work: "Thou shalt bruise his heel." It will be seen that we have here precisely the same term (see *Appendix*, note 6) as is used in respect of the punishment of Satan, indicating that in each case



the infliction will be equally complete and effectual, the contrast being in the part assailed. The serpent's head is to be bruised ; that is, his utmost art, wisdom, energy, power, and dominion are to be crushed and destroyed. The heel of the woman's seed is to be bruised ; that is, as we now know, his lower part, his inferior nature, was to be punished, crushed, and destroyed by death. But did our first parents understand the sentence in this sense? It is not certain that they had clear and correct ideas of the full extent of this infliction ; but the fair presumption is, that they did understand the terms as referring to the extreme suffering, if not to the actual death, of the human nature of the promised Redeemer.

One proof of this is the death of the victim in animal sacrifice, which, in the early ages, was certainly regarded as typical of the appointed Redeemer. And this is abundantly supported by the almost universal tradition of a suffering and dying Mediator Deity, which in a most remarkable manner pervaded all the ancient heathen world. We may instance in the Indian Chreeshna, whose heel was bitten by the great serpent, whose head he afterward crushed ; in the Greek Orpheus, whose wife was bitten by a serpent, which occasioned his descent to the regions of the dead ; and, more especially, in the mediator god of the Scandinavians, Thor, who, in an encounter with the great serpent, succeeded in killing him, but himself fell dead, suffocated with the floods of venom which the serpent vomited forth upon him. Traditions like these, imbedded in the religions of ancient nations, extending from India to Norway, could only have their origin in the events of man's primitive history, and in revelations made to the earliest races of mankind.

Adam and Eve, therefore, in all probability, knew that the destruction of their tempter would be effected by the suffering and death of the Seed of the woman, with whom in one person Jehovah would be united. These views were necessary to

a correct apprehension of sacrifice, and to the exercise of that faith which could alone derive saving efficacy from the immolation of such offerings. As we shall see hereafter, this faith was exercised unto salvation; and, consequently, enlightened views, such, at least in substance, as we have mentioned, must have obtained even in the first human family.

The revelation of Divine knowledge to our first parents did not terminate here. They were further informed by the terms of the judgment on the serpent, that a new and strong feeling was to be called into action, between the serpent and the woman. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." The first clause of this passage, although seldom understood, plainly refers to the communication of the first great gift to mankind, under the economy of grace. The woman had not regarded the serpent, when he first communed with her, as an enemy, but rather as a friend; and, in consequence, was seduced into ruin. Nor, after the fall, could the guilty pair view Satan as their enemy. They felt, indeed, that their condition had fearfully changed; but then, as they became alienated from God by sin, they became "devilish" in the character of their mind. They were in this condition when these words were delivered. The triumph of Satan was complete. Human nature had been ruined; man was covered with guilt and wholly depraved; he lay prostrate beneath the power of the enemy, without strength, or help, or hope. And yet the darkest feature of his case arose from the fact, that he was in perfect accord with his destroyer. What could prevent this? We know that, at present, it requires the utmost energy of redeeming grace to induce man to rise in resistance to the evil influence of Satan. What, then, could prevent his willing subjection to him before any grace was given, before the redemption of man through Christ was brought into operation?

The words before us supply an answer to these questions, and promise the immediate application of redemption, the

instant communication of its grace, in a way most adapted to aid man in his state of ruin, and to counteract and defeat the purposes and power of the evil one. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." "I will," said the Lord, "break up the fatal peace, the covenant with hell, the alliance with death and ruin: 'I will put enmity' in its stead." How was this to be done? Clearly by Divine illumination. The light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world was thenceforth given; and by it the purpose has always been effected. Grace was communicated to show the sinning pair the true nature and intense evil of sin, the real character and deadly design of Satan. Under the influence of this grace, the promised enmity was created. The man and his wife turned away with loathing and abhorrence from sin and Satan; and he, perceiving in these feelings the means of defeating his power and securing the deliverance of his prey, impelled by unbounded malice and enmity, struggled to crush them, and to counteract their influence in these human minds, that they might be bound more firmly to himself.

This communication of grace, therefore, revealed a great and glorious truth, even the immediate application of that scheme of mercy by which Christ, as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," dispensed spiritual light and grace, and became the author of eternal salvation to those that obeyed him. For as the word of promise was received, believed, and realized, enmity to Satan and sin became the ruling principle of life and action, and love to God, and obedience to his will, were, as a necessary result, brought into operation.

It is worthy of remark here, that the enmity is said to extend to the seed of the woman, and to the seed of Satan. There can be no doubt but that these terms primarily refer to the grand struggle between the incarnate Seed and the power of the destroyer. It is equally clear that the sense of the passage goes beyond this reference. In order, then, to see the

import of the clause fully, we have to ascertain the true sense of the words which speak of "the seed" of Satan. Who are they? What is meant by the language? We know of but one Scriptural answer to these questions: "In this the children of God are manifested, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother." 1 John iii, 10, 12. This was the doctrine of the Redeemer: "Ye are of your father, the devil." John viii, 44. The wicked and ungodly, therefore, who reject that gracious influence which produces in the heart enmity to Satan and to sin, are here designated "the seed of Satan;" while, on the other hand, those who, under the teaching and influence of this grace, learn to rise in opposition to Satan and to sin, and partake of the conflict and the victory of the promised Redeemer, are called "the seed of the woman."

I am anxious to direct special attention to this Scriptural exposition; and the more so, because learned men and commentators, otherwise able, have propounded opinions entirely at variance with the views which it suggests, and with the general tenor of revealed truth. It has been asserted, with great frequency, and with the utmost confidence, that the descendants of Seth were a holy seed, who were called "the sons of God," and that the children of Cain were wicked and accursed. All this is not only pure speculation, but is opposed to the general teaching of Holy Scripture. There is not the slightest hint in the sacred oracles, of any such personal or family election to religious privilege under the patriarchal dispensation. On the contrary, it is manifest that the religious economy of this period, like the Christian, was unlimited in its offers of religious blessing. "Its characteristic or genius, therefore," as a late eminent author says, "was universality." (*Faber's Divine Dispensations*, vol. i, p. 5.) Adam and Noah unquestionably communicated to all their children the great religious doctrines and commands which they had received.

There could have been no reason for reserve or concealment in any case; so that, if the promised grace did not operate effectively, it must have been through the unbelief or disobedience of the individual. The principle of hereditary election to religious privilege was first introduced into the Abrahamic family, in order to carry into effect the great process of redemption through an incarnate Redeemer. We have no notice whatever of any such election before the time of the father of the faithful.

We may, then, more particularly notice the words, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This clause has been already explained, so far as its primary application to the Redeemer is concerned. Reference is now made to its secondary sense, in regard to the relations of good and wicked men. And here I may observe, it is true that there is an essential opposition between the servants of God and the children of the wicked one; and this opposition arises from the immediate gift of grace. For, while "the world" will "love its own," it will hate and persecute the servants of God; and for this reason, as Christ himself declared: "But because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." John xv, 19.

These words not only speak of the enmity, or antagonism, thus created, but they speak also of the conflict and suffering which is to be the result: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." So far as this language applies to wicked men, in their relation to Satan as his seed, or children, it imports that they shall share in his destruction. They may hold on their way proudly on the earth, may have all that heart can wish, and may even persecute and punish those who serve God; but their *end is destruction*. They must share the doom of their master. He



will suffer "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord," and that also must be the portion of their cup.

How does this language apply to the seed of the woman, regarded as the pious and faithful servants of the Lord? Do these take a part in the struggle, and are they called to bear their portion of the suffering? We answer, Undoubtedly they are. In every age those who are obedient to the teaching and influence of the Holy Spirit, will be led not merely to oppose the operation and energy of Satan in their own mind, they will also have to meet and repel his agency in respect of others. They will have to come into collision with the usages, practices, and vices of the world, and to bear a testimony against them; to teach, persuade, and entreat the wicked, that they may cease to love sin and to serve Satan, and submit themselves to the righteousness of God. In this way the struggle with Satan and his seed is to be conducted, until the world shall submit to Christ. And that struggle will lead the servants of God to inevitable suffering. As certainly as the impenitent wicked will finally share in the everlasting punishment inflicted on Satan, so certainly will the pious partake in the affliction, persecution, and pain predicted as the portion of the seed of the woman. Not that any sufferings but those of the incarnate Saviour will be expiatory; in that respect he "trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with" him. No merit can, in any measure or degree, attach to any sufferings but his. Yet, nevertheless, the pious will have to endure suffering in consequence of their piety, and that as an ordinance of God. It is open to doubt whether every pious man, who is faithful to the dictates of his conscience and the teaching of the Holy Spirit, does not suffer from the world, the flesh, and the devil, in consequence of his devotedness to God. He participates in the *bruising* of the woman's seed.

Am I told that this gives a most gloomy view of that religion which is declared to be "profitable for the life that now is, and for that which is to come?" I say, By no means. In

such suffering the pious soul is blessed with abundant support and consolation. But these do not, indeed, destroy the painful feeling; they only enable the mind to bear, and even to rejoice, under it. Well sang the sweet poet of Methodism :

“ Pardon, and grace, and heaven to buy,  
My bleeding SACRIFICE expired ;  
But didst thou not my *Pattern* die,  
That, by thy glorious Spirit fired,  
Faithful to death I might endure,  
And make the crown by suff’ring sure ?

“ Thou didst the meek example leave,  
That I might in thy footsteps tread ;  
Might, like the Man of Sorrows, grieve,  
And groan, and bow with thee, my Head ;  
Thy dying in my body bear,  
And all thy state of suff’ring share.”

Thus we come to the conclusion, strange as it may appear, that, in the doom denounced on the serpent, there was made to Adam and to his wife, and to all their posterity, a glorious revelation of Gospel mercy, an outline of the great scheme of redemption by Christ Jesus. It is true this is given only in outline; but it is equally true, that the outline distinctly sets forth those great, prominent truths which involve almost every doctrine of grace. And we have proofs in the facts of man’s primitive history, that he had the means, to a great degree at least, of understanding the true religious import and spiritual bearing of these revelations.

But these words present more than a revelation of truth. There are here glorious promises of a suffering, but triumphant Saviour; of the ultimate and perfect destruction of Satan’s power; and of the immediate communication of enlightening, directing, and supporting grace.

Nor were these words destitute of the most weighty and effective application. It is not possible now to realize the awful circumstances under which this communication was first heard,

the intense anxiety of the parties, the mighty interests which trembled in the balance at the terrible moment. Heard in this connection, and explained by all the attendant circumstances, they must have conveyed to the ears of the hearers the sense long after enunciated in these terms: "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: if we deny Him, He will also deny us." 2 Tim. ii, 12.

Thus glorious in truth, and rich in saving mercy, was the first promise of redeeming grace. Lost man is rescued; convicted and condemned man is snatched from the grasp of his destroyer. A glorious Redeemer is announced, and the results of his Divine intervention are shadowed forth; so that the astonished pair are conducted to the opening of a new way to life and blessing. The revelation of this way will form the subject of our next discourse.

## DISCOURSE II.

## THE WAY OF LIFE, THROUGH REDEMPTION, OPENED.

Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them. And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.—GENESIS iii, 21-24.

Few portions of Holy Scripture have been more generally misunderstood, and in consequence more frequently misrepresented, than this. One reason for these mistakes arises from the great and serious difficulties which, it must be acknowledged, stand connected with almost every portion of this inspired Scripture. But a more prolific cause of error, we incline to think, has been the frequent exposition of these sentences without regard to their immediate historical and religious connection.

It should be observed, that the passage before us forms a part of an exceedingly brief narrative of events which transpired in the earliest portion of human history. We need not be surprised, therefore, that great difficulty has been experienced in the attempt to render the sense of the original into our language. But when, as has frequently been the case, this language has been regarded as without reference to historical and religious antecedents, or to the future developments of the germs of revealed truth, here first briefly enunciated, in following dispensations of grace, the difficulty is very greatly and most unreasonably magnified.

In our present attempt to elicit the true sense of this import-

ant portion of holy writ, it will be our endeavor to avoid these errors. Let it be remembered that the passage narrates events which immediately followed the delivery of the judgment given by the Word of the Lord on Satan and the guilty pair, after our first parents had fallen into sin. The Word of the Lord was heard walking in the garden; Adam and his wife, conscious of their guilt, were terrified, and attempted to conceal themselves; they were called forth, and convicted, by their own confession, of sin against the law of God, through the temptation of Satan; and judgment was delivered on each of the offenders. By this judgment, the woman was exposed to multiplied sorrow and subjection to her husband; the man was doomed to a life of labor, and exposed to sorrow and pain; and it was appointed henceforth that mankind should die, and return to the dust from whence they were taken. But, as we have shown in the preceding discourse, from the sentence passed at the same time on the serpent, Adam and his wife learned the purpose of God to destroy the power of Satan, and to redeem mankind from his influence, through the sufferings of a dying and triumphant Saviour. With this knowledge, other communications were made, showing the means by which these great purposes of grace would be carried into effect.

While the minds of the first pair were filled with these wonderful revelations, and they were yet standing in the presence of the Word of the Lord, the events narrated in the passage now under consideration took place; and took place for the purpose of carrying this plan of redemption, and these purposes of grace, into effect. Surely, then, we must view these transactions not merely as historical incidents, but as measures arising out of, and to be understood and explained by, the cognate facts and truths of the scheme of redemption.

Regarding the passage in this aspect, and using these means for its elucidation, we observe that we have here :

I. The Divine declaration, that man, in his new condition



as a sinner, must be prevented from having access to the tree of life.

The manner in which this is declared presents several difficulties. "Behold, man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden."

In considering these words we must remember, that when the Lord provided the garden for the residence of man, he placed two trees in the midst of it—the tree of life, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The first was necessary to man's continued existence; the second he was forbidden to eat. So that the enjoyment of his highest privilege stood in immediate proximity to the test, of his obedience. By this arrangement the man was prevented from avoiding the sight of the tree of knowledge: every time he partook of the fruit which insured his immortality, and which was the sign and symbol of the reception of spiritual and Divine blessing, he stood near the fruit from which he was bound to abstain in obedience to the Divine command.

But why was the tree called "the tree of knowledge of good and evil?" Many conjectures have been put forth on this subject, which we need not detail. It will suffice to mention one propounded so early as the time of Josephus, and held by many learned men; namely, that the fruit of the tree had a wonderful effect in enlarging the intellectual powers by its physical effects. But, not to urge the evident fact that this interpretation certainly impugns the Divine goodness, it seems a sufficient objection to it to state, that it is the precise notion put forth by Satan: "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." We shall scarcely go to such a source for a truthful interpretation of the sacred text. We rather incline to the exposition of Bishop Patrick, who regarded the terms in this sense—"the test of good and evil." Let

us look at the facts of the case. As far as we are informed, here was the only intimation which Adam had, that evil did or could exist. He might be, and probably was, informed of the defection of Satan, and of his wicked and ruined condition; but of this we are not certain: it is clear, however, that, so far as man was concerned, all in the heavens above him, all in the luxuriance of nature around him, was very good. Here only, in this prohibited fruit, was there any allusion to evil. But that fruit did not necessarily produce any evil; it might do so, or it might be a continued testimony of good. All depended on the conduct of mankind toward it. While they were obedient to the command of the Lord, and abstained from the fruit, the tree was a standing testimony of their goodness. In the absence of such a test, there could be no proof of this; but as the command had been given, so long as it was obeyed, obedience ascertained and asserted the continued purity and goodness of man. The tree, therefore, was called "the tree of knowledge of good and evil," because by it human character was decided and set forth. And so, when the woman and her husband had eaten of the fruit, the fact evinced their evil conduct, and showed forth their sin.

Having thus transgressed, it became necessary to interdict the access of these sinners to the tree of life. Here stood two trees: of one they might freely eat; the other was forbidden. They broke through the prohibition, and in consequence were expelled from both: such is the wages of sin. Their expulsion became necessary to carry into effect the penalty which had been associated with the Divine command: "But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof, *dying thou shalt die*." The tree of life was designed to counteract this tendency to death, and, consequently, it became necessary to prohibit man's access to its fruit, by which means his sentence would take effect; for, deprived of it, every day he lived, all he did, even the food he ate, tended to the decay of his physical

nature; so that, literally, dying, he proceeded onward toward death.

But what is the sense in which the words before us are to be understood? "The Lord God said, The man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." A vast amount of criticism has been expended on this clause, and numerous opinions have been put forth. (See *Appendix*, note 7.) The passage is confessedly very obscure; but the sense which best agrees with the context and the general scope of the subject is, that the words are to be regarded as ironical. Satan had promised the woman that they should not lose, but vastly gain, by their daring disobedience; that they should not die, but, on the contrary, "be as gods, knowing good and evil." Now the Lord, having doomed the serpent to final destruction, and assigned man his new state and condition, on beginning to carry His judgment into effect, reminds him, in the language of lofty irony, of the folly and fallacy of his vain hopes, and of the utter falsehood of the tempter's promise, by which Eve had been beguiled; and calls attention to their case thus: "Behold, the man has become as one of us, to know good and evil." He has attained the coveted elevation. He formerly knew nothing but good; his experience was limited to the enjoyment of blessing. He has dared the anger, and exposed himself to the condemnation, of his Maker; and what has he gained? Simply a knowledge of misery, the experience of pain and remorse. The terrible rebuke is followed by decisive action: "And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever." This would have been altogether unsuitable and pernicious on several accounts. It would have defeated the Divine purpose that, from the date of his sin, man should verge toward death. It would have perpetuated man in misery and sorrow, and have prevented the operation of that plan of final redemption which God had graciously designed for the human family. But chiefly, we think, access to the tree of life was prohibited for

religious reasons; namely, because the way of spiritual access to God which it set forth, was altogether unsuitable to a guilty and sinful creature. While man was innocent and happy, it met his case; and the effect of the life-preserving fruit on man's body aptly typified the communicated blessing by which the soul was nourished and sustained in holiness and happiness.

Evident as this meaning of the passage seems to our mind, we fear that many who have not carefully studied the subject, or consulted the general teaching of the Bible respecting it, may still regard our opinion as little more than hypothesis and speculation. We earnestly beg the attention of such persons to one very significant and important fact. How does Holy Scripture describe the highest, holiest, and most glorious blessing which the redeemed shall receive in heaven, after all the conflicts of life are past, and they are led triumphant through death and the grave to their final reward and rest? When the saved soul and the raised and glorified body are re-united in immortal blessedness in the paradise on high, how is their fullness of heavenly joy and happiness described? By access to the tree of life. "To him that overcometh," said the Son of God to the Ephesian believers, "will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Rev. ii, 7. "Blessed are they who do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." xxii, 14. What do these terms import? Do they simply refer to the sustaining of man's physical nature? These texts refer to a state of being in which the declaration has been accomplished, "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them." 1 Cor. vi, 13. The words are, therefore, figurative; and although they may be intended to set forth the support which all material and dependent creatures constantly need from the great Creator, it cannot be doubted that, as describing the highest elevation of heavenly

felicity, they are also and principally intended to describe the freeness and fullness of that heavenly joy, which God will bestow on the redeemed through all eternity; the most transcendent and glorious enjoyment of God which created existence can possibly realize. If, then, this holy and spiritual joy be the ultimate and ruling character of the blessedness imparted by the tree of life in the midst of the heavenly paradise, was the privilege connected with access to the tree of life in the midst of the earthly paradise altogether carnal, physical, and unreligious? Have we here a type and antetype in direct antagonism? Certainly not. As surely as the highest vision of God and the enjoyment of his salvation are set before us as blessings arising out of access to the tree of life in the heavenly paradise, so surely access to the tree of life in the Edenic paradise stood connected, not only with the maintenance of unimpaired existence, but also with spiritual access unto God, and the enjoyment of his manifested love.

This exposition gives a further, and probably much more weighty reason for the removal of the sinning pair from the sacred spot, than that which has been already assigned. The eating of the fruit of the tree of life might have been a very suitable means of bringing pure and innocent human nature into communion with God and the enjoyment of his love; but it might be utterly unsuitable as a way of access for guilty sinners. "Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden, to till the ground from whence he was taken."

We consequently find man now circumstanced as a sinner, in respect both of his temporal and spiritual condition. Expelled from the garden, he is sent forth to obtain sustenance for himself and his wife from the soil; doomed to labor and sorrow, to sickness and death. But while this change is made in his temporal and physical circumstances, and new means are provided for the support of his animal life, is nothing done to meet the state and condition of his soul? He had heard the doom of the serpent to final destruction; he had listened with



intense interest to the announcement of the triumph of the Seed of the woman. He had heard the Word of the Lord say, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." He had most probably, even at this moment, realized enlightening and quickening grace, teaching him to hate sin, and to cleave in penitential submission to God. And yet, notwithstanding all this, was there no manner of worship appointed? no way of access unto God revealed? Was man—thus informed of the extent of his fall, made the subject of glorious promises—shut out from the means of communication with his Maker which he had previously enjoyed, now abandoned to the resources of his own spirit, to the efforts and energies of his own unaided nature? The supposition is an outrage on all reasonable probability; a violation of all the analogies which the dealings of God and the revealed history of man bring under our consideration. Adam could not have been thus abandoned, could not have been left without means of worship, and access unto God. If so, whence did Abel learn to offer an acceptable sacrifice? How could the enmity between the woman and Satan have been created and maintained? But if any such means were provided, when were they appointed, and what was their nature?

This leads us to the second part of our subject:

II. That the means employed to enforce the expulsion of the guilty pair from Paradise actually opened up unto them a new way of access unto God.

In entering on this very interesting but difficult part of our subject, we have to entreat your very candid attention. We respect and venerate ancient piety, intellectual greatness, and sound learning; and are willing to defer much to the opinion and judgment of persons possessing these qualifications: but this veneration shall not prevent our saying, that the greatest hinderance to sound Scriptural knowledge has arisen from the general currency given to the whims and fancies of eminent men in ancient times. Error is a much more serious antago-

nist to truth than ignorance. We make these observations because we know that notions have been formed and circulated in respect of the portion of Scripture before us, which are unsupported by reason, or by any sound criticism on the sacred text.

The words which we think sustain the proposition laid down above are these: "So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Here our first duty is the ungracious one of demurring to the translation before us. We are bound to assert, that we regard the authorized rendering of this passage as altogether inadmissible, and venture to substitute the following: "And he drove out the man, and tabernacled the cherubim, and the flame of wrath which turned itself before the garden of Eden, to keep the way of the tree of life." Our reasons for this version we give elsewhere, (see *Appendix*, note 8,) so as not to interfere with the consecutive discussion of the subject.

Let us, then, endeavor to realize a common-sense view of this subject. Moses wrote primarily for the instruction of the Israelites. He accordingly prepared a brief narrative of the history and religion of mankind, from the Creation to his own time, as an introduction to an extended account of the history and religion of the Hebrews. That people worshiped God principally by sacrifice, the blood of the immolated animal being sprinkled on the propitiatory, on which were the cherubim, and over which the visible glory of God was seen. Now when, in such circumstances, Moses wrote that the presence of the Lord, and the cherubim, with a flaming fire, were appointed to remain before the entrance of the garden, how would his words be understood by the Hebrews, who were undoubtedly best able to apprehend his meaning? They had traditions of many appearances of angels to Abraham and other patriarchs, but the terms "cherub" or "cherubim" had never been applied to these celestial beings. The only use of the

term that we can find in Hebrew archæology, is its application to the golden figures on the propitiatory. Now, in those circumstances, would it be supposed that by "cherubim" Moses meant angels, or the appointment of some means of worship very similar to the cherubim of the Hebrew sanctuary? Is not all analogy and all probability in favor of the latter? And is not this sense clearly established by the admitted use of the definite article in connection with "cherubim?" Angels are known to be very many: how, then, could Moses say in this place, "THE angels?" But the cherubim were only used for one purpose, were only known by the Hebrews as a portion of the appointed means of access unto God by the blood of sacrifice; and therefore to say that the Divine Presence and flaming fire were associated with *the cherubim* before Paradise, immediately after the fall, would be only to inform them, that the primitive means of worship appointed by God at that time, were very similar to those which were in use in the Hebrew Church during the Mosaic dispensation.

Are we not, then, conducted to this conclusion: that man, expelled from the garden, and deprived of access unto God through the tree of life, was not abandoned to his own energy and invention, but was at once provided with a means of worship, and a way of access unto God, suited to his circumstances and condition as a guilty and depraved sinner; and that this provision is described in the language now under consideration? Let not this conclusion startle any by its strangeness, or be regarded as a fanciful novelty. On the contrary, it gives unity and harmony to the whole of the revelations comprised in the writings of Moses; it places the general tenor of the Mosaic theology in accordance with the traditions of the most ancient and enlightened heathen nations; and, so far from being a novelty, although seldom urged as an element of theology, it has been admitted and maintained by the most eminent scholars of the present and of past times.

Let the passage be carefully considered in this sense. The

expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise by the Word of the Lord is given. It is then added that HE tabernacled the cherubim before the garden of Eden. Have we not here a clear and distinct assertion of the first appearance of the glorious Shekinah? Have we not here the presence and appearance of Him who in all Old Testament Scripture is spoken of as He "that dwelleth between the cherubim?" Let this account be compared with the description of the Mosaic cherubim and oracle, (Exod. xxv, 17-22,) and with the vision of Ezekiel, (Ezek. i, x,) and their sameness must be evident. A word may be necessary as to the fire of wrath. This was an essential element in the sacrificial service. The altar was specially prepared, so that the fire (Exod. xxvii, 1-5) which came down from heaven and consumed the sacrifice, when Aaron first offered for himself and the people, might be kept burning on it, (Lev. ix, 24,) by a constant supply of fuel. This fire was a distinct assertion of God's anger against sin, which was further evidenced in the rite of sacrifice by the burning of a part of every victim. We have another display of this in the vision of Ezekiel, (x, 2,) where the burning coals, taken from this fire of wrath between the cherubim, are scattered over Jerusalem, as a prelude to its destruction.

But it may be asked, How is this view of the passage to be reconciled with those words which speak of keeping or guarding the way to the tree of life? Here we must say that, to a certain extent, this scheme of interpretation presents no difficulty which is not found, in an equal extent, in the popular notion of the passage. The garden is regarded as an inclosure; and as an angelic guard might protect the entrance, so it might be closed by the cherubim and the flaming fire. It must, however, be observed, that, according to the authorized translation, as well as in that which we have adopted, it is not the way *to* the tree of life which is spoken of. It is the way *of* the tree of life. According to our view of the subject, the way *of* the tree of life is the way of access to God. It is

this which the grand antitype in the heavenly paradise sets forth; and it is this which was typically or sacramentally realized in Eden.

We are willing to admit that, in all probability, the cherubim, the flame of wrath, and Divine presence, were so located as to prevent mankind from having access to the tree of life; for man was driven from the garden that he might not eat of it; but we do not think that this fact forms the burden of the text. The way of the tree of life was the way of access to God. This was closed by the sin of man, totally and entirely closed; and, but for the merciful intervention of redemption, must have remained closed forever. But redemption intervened, and that instantly. No sooner was sin committed than the merit of "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" was applied, and that by the means we are now considering. A place and way of animal sacrifice were appointed, by which, through faith in the Divine promise, even the guilty and depraved might come to God, and find acceptance through his mercy. Thus, through these means, notwithstanding the altered condition of mankind, the way of life was kept open, and was maintained inviolate, in spite of all the power of Satan, and all the influence of sin and guilt.

We freely allow that there is no mention of sacrifice in the passage before us; nor is there in the parallel passage, (Exod. xxv, 17-22,) which describes the cherubim and propitiatory of the Mosaic sanctuary; and we only derive our knowledge of the greatest and highest purpose of this propitiatory from the more extended account which we have of the Hebrew worship in the Mosaic and Christian Scriptures: (Lev. xvi, 11-15; Heb. ix, 7:) so that the omission of direct reference to sacrifice in this narrative does not militate against the conclusion we have adopted, provided other circumstances concur in placing the appointment of sacrifice, in connection with the cherubic propitiatory, beyond all doubt. That this is the case will, we think, appear from the following considerations:



1. Sacrifice, that is, the putting an animal to a violent death, and sprinkling its blood as an atonement for sin, must have been of Divine appointment. It is a mode of propitiating the Divine wrath which would never have occurred to the human mind, that putting one of God's creatures to a violent death should atone for sin. Man would never have thought so; neither was it within man's province. He was the offender, and it was for the offended to appoint the means of reconciliation. Indeed, in the nature of things, the means by which an effectual way of grace was opened for sinful man to come to God, must have been of God's appointment. More than this: the appointment of Messiah as man's Redeemer was undoubtedly Divine; and animal sacrifice was a standing type of the death of Christ. Was, then, the appointment of the antitype Divine, and did man stumble by accident on the typical ordinance? Impossible! The appointment of animal sacrifice must, therefore, have been a Divine ordinance.

2. But animal sacrifice was not only introduced, but in actual use, as an efficacious means of procuring the Divine favor, immediately after the fall. "By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous." (Heb. xi, 4.) "A more excellent sacrifice," because he "brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof," while Cain brought only "of the fruit of the ground," a mere vegetable offering. Sacrifice, in this instance, must have been eminently typical of the offering of Christ; for his *faith* in the atonement of his Redeemer was the means of Abel's acceptance.

3. Further, there was in the days of Cain and Abel not only sacrifice as an established institution, but also a *place* recognized as the presence of the Lord. Let the reader carefully mark the Mosaic narrative of this portion of patriarchal history. "At the end of days," we are told, "Cain and Abel brought their offerings *unto the Lord*." This language seems to imply some established institution of time and place. It

has been conjectured that the time was on a Sabbath-day; and this is probable, although we incline to think that these offerings were presented on the occasion of Cain and Abel having obtained maturity, and when they brought, for the first time, oblations of their own to God. They had previously appeared before the Lord as members of Adam's family, and participated in his offerings; they now came in their own persons and names, to tender their sacrifices to God. They accordingly acted under their individual judgment and will, and hence the diversity of their oblations. But if the language before us indicates a regularly appointed time, it certainly supposes some particular and recognized locality. We shall better perceive this, if we omit the extraneous matter, and keep our eye simply on those points of the narrative which refer to this point. The Word of the Lord is heard walking in the garden, Adam and Eve hide themselves, they are called forth, sentence is passed on them and on the serpent, they are doomed to be expelled from the garden, and we are then told: "So he drove out the man, and tabernacled the cherubim and the fire of wrath which turned itself," etc. Days rolled on, and in process of time "Cain brought of the fruits of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth, and why is thy countenance fallen?" etc. Now can there be any doubt as to where these offerings were brought and presented? Must it not have been where the Lord dwelt, between the cherubim? This interpretation casts further light upon the character of Cain. For it seems that, after he had killed his brother, he again dared to appear before the presence of the Lord, when the Lord said, "Where is thy brother?" After hearing his sentence, we are told that "Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on

the east of Eden." Hands stained with a brother's blood could not be permitted to present offerings unto God in his sacred dwelling-place. Cain was therefore prohibited further access to his presence. It is, however, a circumstance worthy of observation, that Cain called his eldest son "Enoch," which signifies *dedicated* or *initiated*, especially in sacred things, as though he was intended to appear as the priest of the family before the Lord instead of his father, who was, in consequence of crimes, excluded from that privilege.

4. These views are further confirmed by the fact, that the sin of Cain mainly consisted in his deliberate rejection of the divinely appointed way of access to God by the blood of sacrifice. A proper elucidation of this point is most important to a clear apprehension of the religion of the first families of mankind.

Nothing can be more unsatisfactory and embarrassing than the account of the rejection of Cain's offering, as given in our authorized version, without recognizing the interpretation which we give to the passage before us. If sacrifice had not been divinely appointed, and a particular kind of sacrifice especially required, why was the offering of Cain rejected, and that of Abel accepted? What is meant by the strange sentences, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door? And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." To these questions, upon the common interpretation, no satisfactory answers have been or can be given. But if, for the reasons assigned, we admit the Divine appointment of animal sacrifice as a vicarious and expiatory atonement for sin, then we have a reason why Cain's vegetable oblation was presented, and why it was rejected. If man was refused access unto God by the tree of life after the fall, because that means was not suitable to the case of a sinful and guilty creature, and a new way of access was provided by animal sacrifice; then the presentation of the animal, and the sprinkling of its blood, would fully amount to a confession of sin, and a supplication

for pardon. And if, at the same time, faith in the great promise of redemption was exercised, acceptance was experienced. This appears to have been the case of Abel. He presented the firstlings of his flock "unto the Lord." And the Lord accepted the offering, in all probability by consuming it, or a part of it, by the fire of wrath which burned between the cherubim; thus showing that the victim was received vicariously for the sin of the offerer. But if Cain, while prepared to admit that he was indebted to Divine Providence for the fruit of the ground, and therefore willing to present his first fruits as a thanksgiving oblation, refused to confess that he was a sinner, and as such to come unto God with an offering of blood, he would act as we are told he did act, and have come with his vegetables alone; and, in such circumstances, the offering would as certainly have been rejected. Let us see whether this version of the case is countenanced by the sacred texts when correctly rendered.

The Rev. G. S. Faber thus translates the Lord's address to Cain: "Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, a sin-offering lieth couching at the door: and unto thee is its desire, and thou shalt rule over it." (See *Appendix*, note 9.) It will be seen at once that this version of the passage perfectly harmonizes with the view given above of the case of Cain. Supposing him to have refused to come as a sinner by the blood of sacrifice, and to have claimed to appear before God with only a eucharistic offering, the expostulation of the Lord, as rendered by Mr. Faber, is most apposite and appropriate. "If thou doest well"—if, indeed, thou canst truly sustain the character thou hast assumed—"shalt thou not be accepted?" That is: "God is not unrighteous: if thou art truly guiltless, thou shalt certainly be accepted. The rejection of thy offering, therefore, is a proof that thou hast mistaken thy own case, hast come in a character to which thou hast no claim. But even then thou hast no cause for

wrath or despair. 'If thou doest not well'—if thou art depraved and guilty, there is no difficulty in approaching God acceptably; the arrangements and purposes of redemption will fully meet thy case. Even now an animal lies couching at the door; there is nothing to prevent thy coming with it as a sacrifice, and being accepted by God, as thy brother has been." Does not this afford a simple, natural, and common-sense exposition of the Scriptural narrative?

Mr. Faber has stated the case of Cain with great perspicuity and accuracy. "Cain, having speculatively rejected the use of bloody sacrifice, and having thought proper to substitute for it an oblation of the fruits of the earth, rejected, by that presumptuous act of will-worship, the rite which had been ordained as explanatory of the mode wherein the Promised Seed was to effect reconciliation between God and man: consequently, as knowing the purport and nature of bloody sacrifice, he rejected the mode of reconciliation itself. Hence his offering was unpleasant in the sight of Jehovah; and hence, while he was assured he should be accepted, provided he did well, he was admonished, that as he did *not* well, or was a sinner in the eyes of the Lord, he was forthwith to bring the victim which lay ready at the door as a sin-offering. Cain, however, instead of obeying the command of his God, slew his brother; and the result was a sentence of banishment from the Divine presence. The murderer, we are told, 'went out from the presence of Jehovah, and dwelt in the land of wandering, on the east of Eden.'

"Now, what was this presence from which he went out? It is not said that the divine apparition of Jehovah departed from Cain, but that Cain went out from the presence of Jehovah; and, as the murderer went *out* and dwelt erratically in a land to the east of Eden, the obvious conclusion is, that he had previously dwelt *in* the land of Eden, and, therefore, *in* the immediate vicinity of Paradise. The Divine apparition, then, was manifested *in the vicinity of Paradise*; and from



*its presence* Cain 'went out into a land of wandering.' The apparition, consequently, was *permanent* in the spot where Jehovah conversed with Cain; for it was *Cain*, and not the *apparition*, who departed. But in the immediate vicinity of Paradise, namely, at its eastern gate, were stationed the cherubim; and when Cain left the vicinity of Paradise, he fled into a land which lay to the east of Eden. Hence, I think, putting all these matters together, and recollecting that, under the Levitical dispensation, Jehovah was wont to manifest his presence between the cherubim, we seem almost inevitably brought to the following conclusion: that Jehovah, as under the law of Moses, *permanently* revealed himself between the cherubim at the eastern gate of Paradise; that the oblations of Cain and Abel were *brought*, as the sacred historian most accurately expresses himself, to be devoted *in the presence of Jehovah thus permanently revealed*; that when, after the murder, (which took place *in the field*, whither the two brethren had gone subsequent to their sacrificing *in the presence of Jehovah*.) Cain again appeared, to worship in this same presence of Jehovah, the sentence of banishment was pronounced upon him by an audible voice from between the cherubim; and that, finally, he went out, still from the same *Divine presence*, when he fled in a direct line from the eastern gate of Paradise to the eastern land of his future wandering, the apparition of Jehovah appearing all the while *permanent* between the cherubic symbols." (*Faber's Dispensations*, vol. i, p. 9.)

5. There is yet another consideration, which is greatly confirmatory of the views previously advanced, and especially as to the Divine institution of sacrifice immediately after the fall. This arises from the first of the verses given as the text of this discourse: "Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." Whence came these skins? It is well known that animal flesh was not included in the primitive grant of food to man. That grant

read thus: "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." Gen. i, 29. Nor was it until after the flood that animal flesh was allowed to be eaten as ordinary food; and this allowance was made by a distinct and extended grant given to Noah, in these words: "And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things." Gen. ix, 2, 3. If, then, animal flesh was not used for food before the deluge, whence came the skins with which Adam and his wife were clothed? It cannot be believed that Adam slew animals in Paradise. After his fall, it does not appear when he could have done so. But, even if the opportunity had occurred, it cannot be supposed that Adam, terror-stricken as he was at the consequences of his sin, would have dared to kill the creatures of God in a wanton manner. Still less can it be believed that these animals died naturally in Paradise, considering that these events took place immediately after the fall. Nor is it probable that these animals would be slain merely for the sake of their skins.

Here, also, as in the preceding cases, we seem shut up to one inevitable conclusion, namely, that these animals had been slain by Divine command, for the purpose of being offered in sacrifice; and that, afterward, their skins were thus appropriated by Divine compassion, to meet the urgent need of the fallen pair. It will strike the most hasty reader that, in this very brief account of a series of the most momentous transactions which ever occurred in our world, the inspired writer would stay to make any trivial passing remark. If these skins pertained to animal victims sacrificed, we have in this Scripture an important and harmonious connection with the whole subject: if it simply teaches the appropriation of skins of dead

beasts, without any reference to the occasion of their death, the notice seems scarcely sufficient to have placed such a passage in the sacred text.

We, however, believe that we may carry our views somewhat further on this topic without wandering into speculation, and thus afford a further illustration of our subject. A careful consideration of the whole case has fully convinced us, that, from the beginning, a part of every animal sacrifice was eaten by the offerers. (See *Appendix*, note 10.) Animal sacrifice, therefore, not only introduced mankind into a way of access unto God through the blood of atonement; it also opened up a new *way of the tree of life*. That is, sacrifice subserved precisely the same purpose to sinners when penitent and believing, that the tree of life did to man while innocent and pure. The former indicated, by the refreshment and support derived to the body from eating the fruit, the support which the soul received from the communication of Divine blessing; the latter showed, by the same effects being produced by the eating of the animal flesh, the certain experience of spiritual life derived by faith from the great atonement, and the continued grace which maintained this spiritual life in activity and power. That such was the object intended by the eating of animal sacrifice, is very clear from the language of Christ respecting himself as the great offering for sin: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." John vi, 53, 54, 56. And the strict evangelical sense of these strong terms is equally evident from the language employed by the Redeemer in immediate connection with these passages: "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." Verse 47. So, believing in Christ is the same as the eating of his flesh. In fact, faith in the great atonement has, ever since the fall, been the instrumental means through which grace has been received through sacri-

fice; and this was visibly represented by eating the sacrificial flesh, which opened up a new way to the tree of life, suited to sinful humanity, and answering to the primitive means of union with God enjoyed by Adam in his innocent condition.

Nor is the appropriation of the skin of the sacrificial victim unknown to the law, or unnoticed in its provisions. In Leviticus vii, 8, we read, "And the priest that offereth any man's burnt offering, even the priest, shall have to himself the skin of the burnt offering which he hath offered." These may appear unimportant circumstances to us, but they may have exerted a mighty influence on mankind in the first period of human existence, when Adam, his wife, and their immediate descendants were the entire population of the world, and they had few cares, and only had to labor to supply their immediate wants. In this peaceful and undisturbed condition, it must have made an impression that all the animal food eaten was sacramental, and spiritually significative; that even the clothes they wore attested the death which sin deserved, and the vicarious sufferings by which they lived.

We are thus led to the following general inference, namely:

III. That this way of access to God remained in use throughout the patriarchal age, and was finally incorporated into the Mosaic economy.

We have no further notice of the place of worship during the antediluvian period. But it is certain that Enoch held holy communion with God, received glorious revelations from him, and delivered earnest and spirited addresses to his contemporaries. Noah was also favored with Divine revelations, preached to the people of his day, and, immediately after the flood, offered unto God a very memorable and acceptable animal sacrifice. As, therefore, we are assured that Noah was influenced by the same faith as Enoch and Abel, we can scarcely doubt that the same manner of worship was maintained by the pious patriarchs, as had been appointed by God in the beginning. And this mode was continued to the days of Moses.

3  
2  
This worship, it may be necessary to observe, consisted at least of three several acts, namely: sacrifice, prayer, and teaching, preaching, or prophesying. On the first, no further remark is necessary here. On the second, we might be satisfied, from the nature of the thing, and the universal traditions of Hebrews and heathens, of the constant union between sacrifice and prayer. In the case of Abraham, we find this repeatedly mentioned: "There he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord." Gen. xii, 8. Abraham must also have delivered discourses to his family and servants, of whom he had a great number, or it could not have been so positively asserted of him, "that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." Gen. xviii, 19. These terms certainly refer to such a certain and defined course of religious conduct, as must imply a rule of life, and consequent teaching and exhortation. Besides, Abraham is distinctly called "a prophet," Gen. xx, 7, which, in those early times, generally signified "teacher, speaker," one who declared the Divine will. Exod. vii, 1. Noah was also "a preacher of righteousness," and we know that Enoch's prophesying was of the nature of preaching. (Jude 14, 15.) And it is more than probable that the death of Abel was occasioned by his firm declaration of his faith in the promise of redemption, and consequent duty to draw near to God in the appointed way of animal sacrifice; hence the pertinent remark of the apostle, "He being dead *yet* speaketh;" words which would scarcely have been used, had he not, before his death, spoken to a religious purpose.

The greatest confirmation, however, which the lower period of patriarchal history affords to the views which we have propounded, is derived from the fact, not only of the continuance of sacrifice as it had existed in the beginning, but of the continued maintenance of a place held in peculiar regard as the presence of the Lord, and where sacred objects were laid up



“before the Lord,” and God was inquired of by the pious, and gave forth to them oracular revelations of his will.

Let us notice particularly the case of Rebekah. In her private and peculiar distress “she went to inquire of the Lord.” And we are told, “The Lord said unto her,” etc. Gen. xxv. Now this surely implies that there was at this time a recognized place, where she might immediately address God, and personally receive his response. The speculations of the fathers as to her going a great distance to consult the Lord by means of Shem and Melchizedek, are puerile and unworthy of notice. No intervention is alluded to; she went to inquire of Jehovah, and Jehovah answered her.

We have another case, which has not received the attention it merits, in the conduct of Balaam. The King of Moab sent to this Gentile seer, evidently believing him to be a prophet; and thus far he was correct; for Balaam certainly had immediate access to Jehovah. (Num. xxii, 8–13, 18–20.) But we call particular attention to Balaam’s conduct after he came to Moab. Having directed Balak to build seven altars, and to offer a bullock and a ram on every altar, “he said unto Balak, Stand by thy burnt offering, and I will go: peradventure the Lord will come to meet me. And God met Balaam:” so he returned and delivered his first prophecy. (Num. xxiii, 1–12.) Balak then took the prophet to another place, where similar sacrifices were offered, when Balaam “said unto Balak, Stand here by thy burnt offering, while I meet the Lord yonder.” Before, as Bishop Patrick observes, he expressed a doubt as to whether the Lord would meet him; but now, having had one interview, he has the fullest confidence, and points toward the place where he expected to meet the Divine presence. (Num. xxiii, 14, 15.) The prophecy there given being still more unpalatable to the King of Moab, he took Balaam to the top of Peor, where other sacrifices were offered; after which we read: “And when Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he went not, as at other times, to seek for enchant-

ments, but he set his face toward the wilderness." Num. xxiv, 1. This will be confessed to be a very strange statement. Balaam had certainly gone at the "other times" to meet the Lord, and the Lord had met him, and revealed to him some of the most glorious prophecies ever delivered: how, then, do we hear of his going to seek for enchantments? Looking away from the clause which speaks of these, we should feel no difficulty in forming an opinion on the conduct of the prophet. We should conclude that he was a worshiper of the true God, who had been favored with special revelations of the Divine will, but who was, notwithstanding, proud and avaricious: that when the messengers of Balak came, he most earnestly desired to obtain the promised reward, but dared not to disobey God in overt action, although his heart went after the unholy gain: that on the second visit of Balak's messengers, the Lord allowed him to accompany them in judgment, intending thereby to carry out his great purposes, and to defeat the machinations of the king, and to punish the cupidity of the prophet: that Balaam, having had on the way a remarkable evidence of the Divine displeasure, doubted, on the first occasion, whether the Lord would meet him, but, hoping to be so favored, he went to the place which he had provided for the purpose, and received a glorious revelation from God. Encouraged by this, on the second occasion he speaks with the utmost assurance of his going to meet Jehovah yonder, and there received a more abundant assurance of the Lord's purpose to bless and exalt Israel. But Balaam loved the wages of iniquity, and greatly wished to interrupt the course of blessing which stood between him and the promised honor and reward. When, therefore, the sacrifices were offered the third time, *he went not as at other times to meet the Lord*, but turned toward the wilderness, hoping thereby to avoid receiving further communications adverse to the wishes of the king. But in this he was deceived; for we are told that, although he had turned away from the Divine presence,

“the Spirit of God came upon him,” Num. xxiv, 2, evidently in an unlooked-for manner, and with irresistible power impelled him to pour forth a prophecy of the safety, greatness, and glory of Israel, with culminating brilliancy and power.

We have no doubt that this is the real sense of the narrative, a true version of the account. But it will be asked, “Is it not in direct contradiction to that statement respecting enchantments?” It is, and we believe that version of the text is in equally direct opposition to the sense of the original Scripture. We have been led to the conclusion that Balaam had brought with him some imitation of the figures and means which had been appointed as the way of access unto God immediately after the fall; that in connection with these means, and probably by the blood of sacrifice, the Lord met him, and revealed his will. In accordance with this view, Julius Bate reads the first verse of the twenty-fourth chapter thus: “And when Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he went not as at other times to meet the appearances in fire; but he set his face toward the wilderness.”—*Similitudes*, p. 162. We do not think this the best possible mode of rendering the sense of the original into English; but it sufficiently indicates the meaning of the text, and we think the translation of the passage in this sense may be fully proved by critical examination. (See *Appendix*, note 11.)

If we are thus far correct, and it be admitted that some means, intended to be similar to the seat of the paradisiacal cherubim, were preserved in the patriarchal age as the habitation of the Divine presence, and the way of access unto God, then we can understand many important portions of Scripture, which are otherwise wrapped in impenetrable obscurity. We have a consistent idea of Laban’s teraphim, which Rachel took from the house of her father, and which he called his “gods.” These were probably such imitations as we have spoken of above, and which might have been used in the

family of Laban, as Rebekah appears to have used her family oracle. This view of the case also explains what in any other aspect of the subject is full of difficulty, namely, the existence of a sacred tent and a seat of the Divine residence among the Israelites, before they had received any part of that economy which was given at Sinai. Hence, even in Egypt, Moses writes in such a manner as to prove that the Israelites had among them a recognized seat of the Divine presence. We read that "Moses returned unto the Lord," Exod. v, 22; "And Moses said before the Lord," Exod. vi, 30; and afterward he said unto the children of Israel, "Come near before the Lord," Exod. xvi, 9; again, "Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations. So Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept." Verses 33, 34. Now, where was this place of Testimony—this Divine presence? We think there can be no doubt but that it was in the tent, or tabernacle, called afterward, "the tabernacle of the congregation." We have an account of this tent immediately after the sin of the people in the case of the golden calf. Then we are told that "Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation. And it came to pass, that every one that sought the Lord went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which was without the camp. And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the tabernacle, that all the people rose up, and stood every man at his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle. And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses. And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle door; and all the people rose up and worshiped, every man in his tent door." Exod. xxxiii, 7-10. We see here that the people regarded the removal of this tent as if the Lord was leaving

them ; so that those who "sought the Lord" immediately followed it, and the others watched the event with deep interest, until the shekinah appeared, "and the Lord talked with Moses," when all the host worshiped God.

Yet this tent, and these memorials of the Divine presence, were all patriarchal ; the Mosaic tabernacle had not been begun at this time ; so that there appears no reason why any branch of the great patriarchal family might not have retained a similar means of access to the Divine presence. For, although the Lord had made great and gracious promises to the family of Abraham, and had wonderfully interposed on behalf of the Israelites, we are not told that, up to this time, he had appointed them any new way of worship, or had given them any peculiar means of access to the Divine presence. Yet the Israelites, when they left Egypt, had priests among them ; for we find the priests spoken of, and directions given them, before the appointment of the Levitical priesthood. They must have been well acquainted with the cherubic figures, afterward placed in the sanctuary ; for, when Moses is directed to make them and the propitiatory, no description is given, as of other particulars, but, on the contrary, the whole account clearly implies a full acquaintance with the things spoken of, so that only such directions were given as were required. "They shall make an ark of shittim-wood : two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold." Then follow other directions respecting the exterior of the ark, after which we read : "And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee. And thou shalt make a mercy-seat of pure gold : two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubim of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy-seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other



end: even of the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubim on the two ends thereof. And the cherubim shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy-seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony." Exod. xxv, 10-22.

From this account it is very obvious that the cherubim were previously known, that access unto God was no unheard-of privilege. All that we have here is direction as to elaborations and details of this new and more perfect typical seat of the Divine presence. If any further direct proof is required as to the essential identity of the patriarchal and Mosaic sanctuaries, we have it in the fact that the pot of manna, which was "laid up before the Lord, before the testimony," (Exod. xvi, 33, 34,) in the former, was afterward placed in the ark of the covenant in the latter. Heb. ix, 4.

The views which we have endeavored to put forth respecting the patriarchal way of access to God, derive scarcely less illustration and support from the traditions and mythology of ancient heathen nations than they do from the Mosaic economy, and the text of Holy Scripture. Cherubic figures have been found associated with the mythology of almost every ancient nation. The sculpture and sacred rites of Assyria and Persia, as represented in their monumental remains, are full of them. We have numerous forms on the monuments of Egypt, as much like the figures described in the Hebrew Scriptures as possible; they are, indeed, all but identical in appearance with the forms which have been sketched for the express purpose of illustrating the sacred volume. Again, we see in those monumental sculptures, in the procession of shrines mentioned on the Rosetta Stone as celebrated in an-

cient Egypt, the most graphic representations of the ark of the covenant, with its compounded winged figures above it. Everywhere in ancient heathenism, in fact, we have more or less of these memorial remains. And can this be wondered at? If the Bible is true; if God really gave to mankind, in the earliest ages, a promise of redemption, and such means of access to himself as were efficient to produce saving faith, and all its happy results, in the hearts of the believing and the obedient; can it be matter of surprise that the providential government of God, and his gracious influence, should have maintained, to some extent at least, the way of access to himself, until the election of Israel reared a living memorial of his power and goodness in the world? Men may sneer and scoff at the idea that Laban and Balaam held communion with God through the appointed rites of the patriarchal Church; but, if nothing like this was possible, what saved those ages from moral putrefaction? If nothing of the kind was possible, why was idolatry sinful? What becomes of the goodness and mercy of the Lord? But it was possible. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob rejoiced in intercourse with God; and if so, as the privileges of the patriarchal period were not limited, but universal, means of access to the Divine presence must have been maintained, until rejected and abandoned through the general prevalence of wickedness and idolatry. And so it was. God left not himself without witness. He did not abandon the world; but mankind generally rejected him, his truth, and his way of life, and sank into all the ignorance, sin, and pollution of idolatry. And then, as if to vindicate the efficiency of the means which had been appointed and preserved in the world for the salvation of mankind, when the world had abandoned and rejected them, he gathered together all the prominent elements of this way of life, and associating them with more perfect revelations of his will, and crowning them with the continual glory of his presence, made them the culminating privilege of his elect people, until the glorious promise

of redemption was finally accomplished in the incarnation and sacrifice of his own dear Son.

These investigations not only harmonize the earliest Revelations of Divine truth and mercy with the whole economy of grace, but also clear up, and completely establish, the truth in respect of an important question which induced the most conflicting views among the first scholars of the past age, to the great detriment of the cause of revealed religion.

The similarity found to prevail almost everywhere between the sacred rites of the ancient heathens and the Mosaic institutions, is such as to lead every careful observer to conclude that they must, in some way, have had a common origin. This has led to the diversity of opinion to which we have referred. One class of writers have maintained that the Mosaic institutions were, in a great measure, copied from more ancient Gentile rites; and some have gone so far as to imagine that God has so condescended to the errors and obliquities of the human mind, as to have appointed, not only many ordinances of the Hebrew law, but even the great sacrificial Atonement of the Gospel, to meet the practices and prejudices of the ancient heathen. Maimonides, Marsham, Spencer, Warburton, and Tenison, have more or less supported this opinion. Others maintain, that all the ancient Gentile religious rites were borrowed from the divinely appointed ordinances of the Hebrew Church. This view is advocated by Gale, Dickinson, Stillingfleet, and others. A third opinion is, that the remarkable similarity spoken of is to be attributed to the fact, that most of the ancient heathen rites are corruptions of patriarchal worship and religious institutions; while the Mosaic economy contains the prominent elements of patriarchal religion purified from error, and extended and rendered more instructive in their typical import. This is, we have no doubt, the true solution of the difficulty. It meets all the phases of the phenomena, and it reconciles fully the history and religions of the ancient heathen world to the records of Holy Scripture.

## DISCOURSE III.

## THE MEDIATORIAL WAY OF ACCESS TO GOD.

And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony that I shall give thee. And thou shalt make a mercy-seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubim of gold; of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy-seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end; even of the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubim on the two ends thereof. And the cherubim shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy-seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony.—Exodus xxv, 16-22.

In our preceding discourses we have had to gather up, from brief and isolated portions of Scripture, the purposes of Divine mercy to mankind. These, it is true, taken in connection with subsequent revelations, have been the means not only of affording considerable information respecting the religious privileges and condition of the world in patriarchal times; but also of placing before us some great elements of the scheme of redemption in a very interesting and impressive point of view. Yet with all this there has been found a brevity, and to some extent a want of connection, which has been embarrassing, and which has made it difficult to comprehend with precision, and to prove with certainty, the extent and true character of the religious agencies with which this age was favored, and their exact relation to the great economy of grace.

We are now brought to a period when these difficulties are, to a great degree, removed. In the rise, progress, and development of the Levitical system, we have the prominent

elements of patriarchism united, extended, and explained. More than this, we have in this system a way of access to God opened to the elect people, which we have reason to believe to be a modification and extension of that which obtained in the patriarchal Church, and which typically set before them the great truths of the Gospel; and, consequently, these typical means, when considered in the light of the New Testament Scriptures, afford us the brightest and best illustration of the blessings and privileges of that glorious dispensation under which it is our happiness to live. It will be our object in this discourse to consider these several subjects as fully as our limits will allow. The portion of the Mosaic Scriptures which is placed more immediately under our notice, leads us into the very center of the system, and places full in our view the great apparatus of means by which the elect people of Israel had access unto God.

In endeavoring to carry out this purpose we shall attempt,

I. To describe the several parts of this sacred apparatus, showing, as far as possible, the origin of each, and the manner and object of their use under the Mosaic economy.

II. To ascertain the relation of these to the great truths, facts, and privileges of Gospel salvation, and the extent to which the latter continue to be illustrated and enforced by the former.

In entering upon this difficult, but interesting and important inquiry, it may be observed that we shall not confine our attention to the particulars spoken of in the text, but extend our investigations to the whole tabernacle, and all the various articles composing its sacred furniture.

In doing this it will be necessary to refer to a fact alluded to at the close of the last discourse, namely, that the Mosaic economy must not be regarded as a new revelation of Divine truth, an original system of gracious institutions for the salvation of man, but rather as a development of the scheme which had been introduced soon after the fall. This is forcibly set



forth in the following extract from an able living author: "The Mosaic religion did not start into being as something original and independent; it grew out of the patriarchal, and was just, indeed, the patriarchal religion in a further state of progress and development. So much was this the case, that the mission of Moses avowedly begins where the communications of God to the patriarchs end; and, resuming what had been for a time suspended, takes for its immediate object the fulfillment of the purpose which the Lord had, ages before, pledged his word to accomplish. (Exod. iii, 7-17.) Its real starting-point is the covenant made with Abraham, and which was afterward confirmed to Isaac and Jacob, with an especial reference to that part of it which concerned the occupation of the land of Canaan. And as the one dispensation thus commenced with the avowed design of carrying out what the other had left unfinished, the latter of the two must be understood to have recognized and adopted as its own all the truths and principles of the first. What might now be regarded as fundamental, and required as such to be interwoven with the historical transactions by which the dispensation of Moses was brought in, must have been, to a considerable extent, super-additional, including those, indeed, which belonged to the patriarchal religion, but coupling them with such others as were fitted to constitute the elements of a more advanced state of religious knowledge and attainment."—(*Fairbairn's Typology of Scripture*, vol. ii, p. 3. These principles must be recognized, and the whole course of our investigation will confirm and illustrate them.

I. We proceed to describe the tabernacle, its parts and furniture, with the origin of each, and the manner and object of their use.

The tabernacle itself was in figure what is called a long square, which (reckoning the cubit at eighteen inches) was forty-five feet long, fifteen feet wide, and fifteen feet high. It was made of boards, which, being overlaid with gold, rested in

sockets of silver, and were fastened together by gold rings, through which transverse bars were passed. This frame-work was kept in a perpendicular position by cords fastened to the top of the boards, and to brass pins driven into the ground. (Exod. xl.) The building was divided into two apartments by a large, beautifully embroidered curtain of blue and scarlet, which was called "the vail;" the outer room, which was named "the holy place," being thirty feet long; and the inner, or "most holy place," being fifteen feet long, and consequently a perfect square, being also fifteen feet wide, and fifteen feet high. These two rooms were ceiled, and hung on all sides with beautiful embroidery of the same kind as the vail. There was no door between the holy and most holy place, nor was there any door to the outer tabernacle. The door-way was divided by pillars of wood; and an embroidered curtain, similar to the vail and the hangings of the sanctuary, was hung down over the entrance. Access was had to the outer sanctuary and to the most holy place by lifting up the curtain, or vail, and passing under it. There were three coverings thrown over the wooden framework of the tabernacle on the outside: the first was made of fine goats' wool, the second of red leather, and the third of a coarse leather, better adapted to resist the action of the atmosphere and the changes of weather. The question then presents itself: What was the origin of this tabernacle? So far as its design and pattern are concerned, we know that Moses received them immediately from God. (Exod. xxv, 9.) But was this tabernacle, as such, an original institution? On the contrary, we have shown in a preceding discourse, that there was a tabernacle in the camp of the Hebrews from the time of their leaving Egypt, which was called "the tabernacle of the congregation," and which seems to have been of a character analogous to that which was afterward erected, and which has been now described. To what was then advanced, little can now be added, except to remind the reader, that from the beginning the patriarchs had a place

known as the seat of the Divine presence; and that the same means continued among the Hebrews before (see *Appendix*, note 12) and after the Exodus, and were, subsequently to that event, associated with the first tabernacle of which we have spoken.

The object and use of the Mosaic tabernacle, as well as of its precursor, was primarily to form a seat for the Divine presence, a habitation for the Lord. The Divine requirement was, "Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them." *Exod.* xxv, 8. Here, therefore, the people, through the instrumentality of their priests, had access unto God. It was, in fact, the center of the religious economy of the covenant people of the Lord; the seat of their most solemn and sacred observances. It is worthy of observation, that this very costly structure was, by the command of God, erected by means of the voluntary contributions of the people at large, except the silver sockets in which the boards were placed, and which constituted the foundation of the structure, and the capitals and ornaments of the pillars of the court. These were formed from the aggregate of a poll-tax levied on every adult male, (*Exod.* xxx, 12, 13,) each paying half a shekel.

Although, when viewed in the full sunlight of Gospel privilege, the services performed in this sanctuary have been called "carnal ordinances," and it "a worldly sanctuary," *Heb.* ix, 1, 10, these were, nevertheless, "ordinances of Divine service," and, as such, means of grace to the contrite and faithful among the ancient Israelites. Nor can we, perhaps, at this time, adequately estimate the judgment and feeling with which this people regarded the habitation of God among them. It is scarcely possible to exceed the strength of the language in which they frequently expressed their confidence and exultation: "The holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." *Psalms* xlii, 4, 5.

The outer part of the tabernacle, or holy place, contained

the golden altar, or altar of incense, the golden candlestick, and the table of show-bread. The first of these, the altar of incense, was made of shittim wood, and completely covered with plates of gold. It was a cubit square and two cubits high, and ornamented with a crown, or cornice, of gold. It stood in the middle of the sanctuary, immediately before the vail. On the north side of the altar of incense stood the table of show-bread. (Exod. xxvi, 35; xl, 22, 23.) This was made of the same materials as the altar, and was two cubits in length, a cubit in breadth, and a cubit and a half in height, having a crown, or ornamental cornice, round about, and a border and a second crown above it. (Exod. xxv, 23-25; xxxvii, 10-12.) The dishes, spoons, covers, and bowls pertaining to this table, were all of gold. (Exod. xxv, 26-30; xxxvii, 13, 17.) The golden candlestick stood on the opposite, or south, side of the holy place, and was of beaten gold, consisting of seven branches holding as many lamps. These, with their snuffers and dishes, were made of pure gold. The lamps were fed with pure beaten olive oil, and were always kept burning at night. Exod. xxvii, 20, 21; Num. viii, 1-4.

Before we proceed to describe the furniture of the inner sanctuary, it will be necessary to refer to the court of the tabernacle and its contents. This court was a space inclosed around the tabernacle by posts or pillars, about half the height of the tabernacle, on which was suspended a linen curtain, on the two sides and ends, except at the entrance called "the gate of the court," which was directly opposite the door of the tabernacle. Here the entrance was formed of a curtain exactly similar to the vail, and the curtain which formed the door of the tabernacle. In this court, immediately opposite the entrance, stood the brazen altar of burnt-offering. Its substance and manner of formation are described, Exod. xxvii, 1-8. On this altar a bullock was offered every day, and two lambs, one in the morning, and the other in the evening, continually. (Exod. xxix, 36-42.) Between the altar and the door of the tabernacle

stood the brazen laver. It is described as made of the *mirrors* of those who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; such articles being, at that time, usually made of the finest brass. (Exod. xxxviii, 8.) This laver contained water, and was provided in order that the priests might wash themselves, and so enter the sanctuary of the Lord in a state of perfect cleanliness and purity.

The use of these several sacred articles is, in most instances, indicated by their names. The altar of incense was used for the purpose of burning incense. Fire, taken from the brazen altar in the court, was placed on this altar; and sweet incense being thrown on it, the perfumed smoke arose, and filled the sanctuary with the sweetest odor. The table of show-bread was appointed to receive a continual supply of bread. Twelve loaves were placed on it every Sabbath day, when those which had stood there the preceding week were removed and eaten by the priests. Wine was also kept on this table in bowls, and cups, and covered vessels. The bread was sprinkled with frankincense, and, according to the Alexandrine version of the Septuagint, with salt also. (Lev. xxiv, 7.) This bread was called "the bread of the *face* or *presence*," because it was exhibited before the face or throne of Jehovah; "the *bread arranged in order*," and "the perpetual bread." Lev. xxiv, 6, 7; 1 Chron. xxiii, 29. The golden candlestick, or more properly lamp-stand, supported seven lamps, which were lighted every evening.

It now becomes necessary to describe the contents of the inner sanctuary, or holy of holies. These were limited almost wholly to the ark of the covenant and its accessories. The ark itself was a box or small chest, a cubit and a half high, a cubit and a half broad, and two cubits and a half long. It was made of shittim wood, and coated over with the purest gold within and without; but its cover or lid was of solid gold, and was ornamented on its upper surface with a border or rim of the same precious metal. Each end of this cover was extended, so as to afford material



out of the same piece of gold to form two cherubim, one on each end of the cover of the ark. The form and position of these figures have created one of the most litigated points in the whole Bible. We do not hope to set at rest a question of so much difficulty and importance, although we feel bound to give a brief exposition of the whole case. (See *Appendix*, note 13.) From what is said in other parts of Holy Scripture on the figure of the cherubim, it scarcely admits of a doubt that the human was the ruling element in the cherubic form; for Ezekiel, (i, 5,) in describing the general appearance, before noticing their several component parts, says emphatically, "This was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man." But with the general prevalence of the human form were associated parts of the figures of the lion, the ox, and the eagle. (Ezek. i, 8-11.) There can be no doubt that the cherubic figures on the ark were very similar to the living creatures described by the prophet of Chebar. He, being a priest, must have been well acquainted with the cherubim of the sanctuary; yet, when he saw these compound living creatures in his vision, he says, "I knew that they were the cherubim." Ezek. x, 20. These figures were, as we have said, made out of the same piece of gold as the propitiatory, and stood on it, one on each end, their faces being turned toward each other, and their wings extended above, so as to touch each other, forming a complete canopy over the whole. In the ends of the ark rings were fastened, through which staves covered with pure gold were placed. By these poles or staves the ark was carried by the priests in the various wanderings of Israel through the desert, and in all the subsequent removals of this sacred depository. These poles or staves also served another purpose, namely, to conduct the high-priest to the propitiatory, when he entered the most holy place on the great day of atonement, to sprinkle on it the blood of sacrifice. For it must be remembered that the outer sanctuary had no windows, and was only lighted by the lamps on the

golden candlestick at night, and by raising the curtain which covered the door in the day-time ; while the inner sanctuary, where the ark was, had no light whatever, except what was derived from the shekinah of God, or from the outer sanctuary, when the vail was lifted for the purpose of affording ingress or egress to the high-priest on the great day of atonement. In the tabernacle, where the most holy place was but fifteen feet square, the ark placed in the center of the room, being but five or six feet from the vail, could be easily seen when the high-priest lifted this embroidered curtain to enter the most holy place ; so that he had no difficulty, when the vail fell behind him, although in perfect darkness, to find his way to the ark of God. When, however, the temple was built, and the most holy place in it was, by Divine appointment, (1 Chron. xxviii, 11 ; 1 Kings, vi, 20,) made thirty feet square, the ark, when placed in the center, was so far from the vail, that the priest, on entering, might not certainly direct his steps so as to find it in total darkness. And therefore, when the ark was put into this sanctuary, the poles or staves by which it was carried were drawn out as far as possible toward the vail, so that when the priest lifted that embroidered curtain to enter, he could clearly see them, and, stepping between them, would be certainly guided to the propitiatory. (1 Kings viii, 8. See *Lightfoot's Temple Service*, pp. 294, 205.)

It has been necessary to give this particular description of these sacred places and things, as, without a distinct apprehension of them, it is impossible to appreciate the nature and effect of the solemn services conducted during so many centuries, by Divine command, as the prescribed worship of the elect people of God.

As the priests ministered in regular courses, a certain selection was made for the discharge of the duties of each day. It is alleged that anciently much confusion was occasioned for want of a proper appointment of ministers for this daily duty ; and that, in consequence, in the latter period of Hebrew his-

tory, the priests for each day were appointed by lot. When, however, the appointment was made, and the priests whose duty it was to conduct the ministrations of the day, (see *Appendix*, note 14,) perceived the day to dawn, they invariably washed themselves, and prepared to enter on their sacred duties. So devoted were they to an early service, that it is said the light of the moon has been, on some occasions, mistaken for the day, and the morning sacrifice been offered even while it was still night. The first duty would be to cleanse the altar of burnt-offering of its ashes, and to place the fires in a proper state. This being done, as soon as daylight certainly appeared, the lamb for the morning sacrifice was brought to the altar. These preparations having been made, the court of the tabernacle, or of the temple, was opened, and the trumpets sounded, to make public announcement that the sacred service was being performed. The lamb was then slain, and the blood sprinkled on the altar; and while this was being done, the lamps were trimmed, and the altar of incense cleansed. Then the priests and the people united in prayer; and while they were thus engaged, the priest whose office it was, took fire from the altar of sacrifice, carried it into the sanctuary, kindled it on the altar of incense, and having laid on incense, watched the process of its consumption. Luke i, 9, 10.

After prayer was finished the sacrifice was placed on the fire on the brazen altar, and consumed. The blessing (Num. vi. 24-26) was then pronounced by the priest, after which the meat-offerings were presented; then the drink-offering; and last of all, the song of praise was sung, accompanied by instrumental music. During the progress of this service, at every pause in the singing the trumpets sounded and the people worshiped; and having done so, at the close they departed.

This whole service, with a little variation as to the time of burning the incense, was repeated in the evening, and so on every ordinary day throughout the year. The Sabbath days

were regarded as highly sacred, and as such were ushered in with very solemn preparation. This preparation for the Sabbath began at three o'clock on the afternoon of the preceding day. The Sabbath began at sunset, and the evening sacrifice preceding it was regarded as a season of unusual solemnity. On the Sabbath four lambs were sacrificed for the morning and evening sacrifice, instead of two, as on other days. And in the later ages of Hebrew history, the people attended religious services in the synagogues, in the intervals of the sacrificing seasons. Thus every day throughout the week, twice, indeed, on every day, and throughout the whole of the Sabbath, were the Hebrew people brought into intercourse with God, and led in the most solemn and affecting manner to acknowledge and, if serious and faithful, to realize the death which sin deserves, and the efficacy of vicarious bloodshedding for its remission.

On one day in the year, however, these weighty religious truths were enforced on the public attention by rites, the solemnity and religious effect of which it is scarcely possible for us at this time adequately to estimate. This was on the great day of atonement or expiation. On this day (and it was the only one throughout the year) the Hebrews maintained uninterrupted abstinence from food for more than twenty-four hours; at least, so say the rabbies. This, however, is not expressly stated in the law laid down by Moses for the institution of this ordinance; unless the command, "Ye shall afflict your souls," (Lev. xvi, 29,) is to be regarded as prohibiting the use of food, which sense seems sustained by the language of Isaiah: "Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul?" Isa. lviii, 5.

The services of this day far exceeded in importance every other of the Hebrew ritual. Others made expiation for certain specified sins, or for the sins of certain persons; those of the day called by way of eminence "the day of atonement," were intended to expiate all the sins of all the people throughout

the whole year. They were therefore conducted by the high priest in person, who performed by far the most important functions of his office on this day. On this account the Hebrew writers inform us that the high priest spent the preceding night in diligent preparation for the right performance of his duties.

On the dawning of the appointed day he, having put off his usual apparel, washed himself, and put on the ordinary priestly garments of white linen; (Lev. xvi, 4;) he then conducted to the altar a bullock, which was provided as a sacrifice for his sins and those of his family, and two goats, to be offered for the sins of the people. Laying his hands on the head of the bullock, he prayed that God would accept the sacrifice as an atonement for his sin. In the later ages the following prayer was used on this occasion: "O Lord, I have sinned, done perversely, and transgressed against thee, I and mine house. I beseech thee, O Lord, expiate the sins, perversities, and transgressions, whereby I have sinned, done perversely, and transgressed, I and mine house; as it is written in the law of Moses thy servant, saying, For on this day he will expiate for you, to purge you from all your sins before the Lord, that ye may be clean."—*Lightfoot's Temple-Service*, p. 175. Having prayed thus, the high priest went to the two goats, casting lots which of them should be sacrificed, and which should be sent alive into the wilderness. (Lev. xvi, 7-9.) He then slew the bullock; and while the blood was received and reserved for sprinkling, he took a censer full of coals from the altar, and a dish of incense, and went into the sanctuary, and, entering the holy of holies, stood before the ark, and placed the incense on the burning coals in the censer, and stayed there until the room was filled with the smoke of the incense. Leaving the censer there, he came out into the court, and taking the blood of the bullock, went again into the most holy place, and, as before, placing himself between the poles of the ark, went up to the propitiatory, and dipping



his finger into the blood, sprinkled it seven times below and once above the mercy-seat. Having done this, leaving the basin and the blood there, he again went out, slew the goat allotted to sacrifice, and taking his blood into the most holy place, he sprinkled it eight times, as in the case of the blood of the bullock. Afterward he sprinkled the blood of the bullock, and then of the goat, eight times before the vail. He then mingled the remainder of the blood, both of the bullock and of the goat, and sprinkled therewith the golden altar, going round about it; then he sprinkled the body of the altar seven times; then he went into the court, and poured the blood that remained at the foot of the altar of burnt-offering. (See *Appendix*, note 14.)

The high priest then proceeded to send away the scape-goat into the wilderness. Laying his hands on the head of this animal, he confessed "over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat," Lev. xvi, 21; after which it was sent away into the wilderness.

The high priest now put off his linen garments, attired himself in his rich and glorious robes, and then offered another ram in sacrifice for himself, and one also for the people. Again he washed his hands and his feet, and went forth in all his vestments of purple and gold, with the breast-plate, miter, and other appendages, and pronounced on the people the three-fold benediction: "Jehovah bless thee and keep thee; Jehovah make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; Jehovah lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." Num. vi, 24-27. And so this august service was concluded.

We have now to consider the object and end of these sacred services, in their relation to Hebrew worshipers under the Levitical economy.

The great truths inculcated in the act of animal sacrifice, such as the righteous nature of God, the intense evil of sin,

the fearful consequences of guilt and its deadly demerit, and the means of recovery through vicarious suffering; these must be regarded as fundamental doctrines of Hebrew faith. All their traditions and family history were full of proofs and illustrations of these tenets; they were imbedded in the public mind, and although found there frequently in contact with many great errors, and not made, as they ought to have been, in their united influence, a rule of life, they were always, to some extent at least, tacitly recognized, and professedly believed.

The Hebrew people, however, had not only the light which was afforded by those doctrines; they had this in connection with historical and traditional facts, that gave them great additional weight and influence. Learned and professedly religious writers in modern times have largely speculated on the human origin of sacrifice, and the probability of its having been brought into use by ignorant and uncivilized men under low and carnal views of God and of his claims on mankind. It is scarcely possible that the early Hebrews could have been affected by such errors. They knew too well the early history of mankind. They were familiar with the religious faith and practice of their most venerated ancestors; and it must not be forgotten, that they numbered in this category not only Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but Noah, Enoch, and Abel. The Hebrews knew that the means by which they were offered access unto God were, in all their great elements, essentially the same as those which, by God's appointment, had offered the same privilege to our first parents immediately after the fall. They would therefore see in these sacred institutions old, hallowed, and long recognized means of worshiping God, and of obtaining gracious access to his Divine presence.

But the Hebrews thus drew near to God not merely in an ancient manner, and in the use of means consecrated to the mind by the religious veneration of ages; they did so by the immediate command and by the express direction of God,

given by himself in distinct terms to Moses and their fathers. So that, while the worship of the Hebrews possessed all the *prestige* of long established use, and was consequently fully appreciated and understood, it was enjoined on them by the direct authority of Heaven, and sustained by the highest sanctions which God could address to the mind of man. Who can contemplate the glorious revelations of Sinai, the marvellous displays of angelic ministration, and the still more magnificent and terrible manifestations of God, which accompanied the communication of the Hebrew law, without perceiving that this was fully the case? Their sacred institutions were sanctioned both by the most holy, venerable, and time-honored authority, and by the most clear and immediate Divine sanction.

Let us then endeavor to realize the designed religious effect of these divinely appointed services; the religious effect which resulted from their observance when they were performed in an humble, faithful, and spiritual frame of mind.

In order to this, it will be necessary for us to place prominently before the mind the important fact, that the Hebrews worshiped a present God. The residence of the Lord Jehovah in the tabernacle, and afterward in the temple, was not merely a notion, a wild, enthusiastic idea; it was a fact, a fact declared to them by the solemn assertion of the Divine word, a fact attested by the evidence of their senses. While, therefore, the people gathered around in deep humiliation and contrition, the high priest entered into the most holy place, where God was; there, in silence, solitude, and darkness, to stand in the chosen habitation, the immediate presence of the Lord.

More than this, the Hebrew people drew near to God, in these solemn and affecting services, under a deep sense, a clearly admitted conviction, of their guiltiness, and consequent exposure to Divine punishment. This is manifest from the fact that they could only come by means of a sacrifice of blood. Nothing is more certain than that this way is only

applicable to convicted sinners, whose guilt deserves the punishment of death. Yet in this way they came, placing the lamb, the bullock, or the ram, as their divinely appointed substitute, to receive the death their sins deserved, and to expiate, by the offering of his blood, the guilt of their iniquities.

Nor was this a mere tacit admission of guilt. It was intended for a weighty and influential conviction of sin, to be fixed in the heart and conscience, under the most solemn and affecting influence. The people were summoned themselves to worship the Lord. They gathered around the sanctuary, and bowed and prayed to the God of their fathers. Now it is perfectly clear that, in praying for the acceptance of the appointed sacrifice, their prayer was in reality that their sins might be placed on the substituted victim, and that its blood, thus vicariously shed, might be received as an expiation for the sin, and avert the merited punishment from the convicted sinner. The self-examination, recognition of sin, and earnest supplication required by this process, are clearly adapted, beyond any other means, to give to the individual mind a just sense of the nature and demerit of sin.

But the sacred things of the most holy place were calculated to excite and strengthen these deep religious convictions. The Hebrew worshipers knew very well that the sanctuary was not only the Divine dwelling-place, but that God dwelt there as their King, and Judge, and Saviour. They knew that in that limited space in which he chose to manifest his especial presence, there was nothing but what related to them and their covenant relation to him. There was the ark, but it was emphatically the ark of the covenant, and constituted the dwelling-place of God as their covenanted Lord. It contained the tables of the law, as if constantly to remind them of the terms of this covenant relation; to keep continually before their mind the important fact, that though they might forget, or neglect, or rebel against the law, God never lost sight of it; that it was ever present to his mind, always

under his eye. How affecting is this solemn fact? God came down to dwell with his elect people, to tabernacle in their midst ■ their refuge and defense; yet while doing this, in the secret of his pavilion he has always before him the law he has given them for ■ rule of life. What a glorious illustration is this of the holiness of God! What ■ protest against all Antinomianism! What ■ proof that no sin can escape his notice, no transgression be concealed from the vigilance of his eye!

In close proximity to the ark were the pot of manna and Aaron's rod; memorials rich as means of consolation to devout Hebrews: the first kept in everlasting remembrance of the ability and willingness of the Lord to minister every necessary means of support, even in the most adverse and extreme circumstances. The second, if, as is most probable, it was the identical rod with which the miracles of Egypt and of the wilderness had been wrought, bore undoubted testimony to the readiness of God to defend his people in all danger, and to deliver them from every evil.

We see, therefore, that the devout Hebrew, when drawing near to worship God, had not his mind distracted and bewildered by a multiplicity of objects. God was revealed to him as dwelling in the midst of his people, judging them by the rule of his own law, and keeping before his mind, and before their minds, unfailing memorials of his ability to provide for them, and of his power to defend them.

It appears to us, that if the Hebrews had nothing more than a knowledge of the existence of these sacred things, crowned as they were by the abiding presence of the Lord, they would have possessed abundant means for ■ spiritual and intelligent waiting upon God in holy worship. But they had more than this. They had all these sacred means imbued with life, placed in active operation for their spiritual enlightenment and salvation. God not only dwelt among them in the secret place of his sanctuary, in a manner, and with memorials of his past goodness toward them, which ought to have kept their faith



and obedience in constant activity; but actually provided for their coming in solemn worship twice every day, and, what is worthy of special notice, for their having access to his immediate presence once a year in the person of the high priest.

There is not a step in the whole process of the high priest's action on the great day of atonement, which does not merit the most serious and devout consideration. In the first place, it is observable, that on this occasion he comes forward as a type of the Redeemer, on behalf of the great body of the nation, the whole of the Hebrew people. It is equally to be noted, that he did not on that account lose his individual character. This is a lesson which all, and especially the advocates for extreme ecclesiastical authority, will do well to bear in mind. Although called forth, by the express authority of God, to act for, and on behalf of, the whole people, the state of his own heart—his individual relation to the Lord—is the first thing to be attended to. His action is, in consequence, based on an acknowledgment of his own sins, and of the sins of his family. These are, in the first instance, expiated by the blood of a bullock sacrificed for this express purpose. Having slain this animal, and while the people were engaged in earnest prayer to God, he went with sacred incense into the most holy sanctuary. Can the mind of man conceive of a more intensely solemn and affecting action? To pass into the immediate presence of the Holy Lord in the profound darkness of his sanctuary; there, alone, to stand, and to offer up the symbolical embodiment of the people's prayers in the smoking incense before the propitiatory. Having done this, he returned for the blood of the bullock, to offer as an expiation for his own sin. We know not how these priests felt while engaged in these most solemn services; but surely nothing could be more calculated to fill the mind of man with awe—to impress the very depths of the soul with a profound conviction of the evil and danger of sin—than for a man to take the blood of sacrifice, and to sprinkle it in the immediate presence of God, as an atonement for his own soul; thus,

by faith in vicarious suffering, to poise the atoning efficacy of sacrificial blood against the guilt and pollution of his transgression. How far did these men look backward into the past? Did they realize the faith of Abel in primitive times, and, like him, "obtain witness" that they were "righteous?" How far did they look forward? Did they, like Abraham, by faith apprehend the day of Christ, and rejoice in the prospect of its glory? These questions do not admit of any general answer. We cannot doubt that many pious and holy men, who from time to time filled this high office, did thus graciously experience the saving power of faith, and rejoice in the blessedness of an accepted atonement. At the same time, it seems equally certain that very many of the high priests were so worldly and wicked, that we cannot suppose them to have done anything more than act a merely formal part in this highly important service.

Having offered this sacrifice for himself, the high priest returned to the court of the sanctuary, received the blood of the ram which was slain as an atonement for the people, and took it into the most holy place. This was, indeed, the culminating point of the august service. All that preceded it was merely preliminary to this grand object. The people's prayer, and its symbolical representative, the burning incense; the sacrifice for the high priest and his family, and its acceptance on their behalf, were only means preparatory to the expiation of the sins of the people. It is deeply affecting to contemplate the high priest taking the blood of the appointed sacrifice into the immediate presence of God, and sprinkling it there as an atonement for all the sins of all Israel. How did the people feel during the progress of this impressive proceeding? Alas! there can be no question that, generally, the bulk of the people were too unspiritual in their character to give serious heed to this purely devotional service. There were, however, always a few—in some periods many—who apprehended its vast range of import and blessing; and these would, of course, indi-

vidually realize its saving influence just according to the measure of spirituality and faith which they severally possessed.

The depth of feeling displayed by these serious and devout Hebrews on this solemn occasion, is recorded in the strongest terms in rabbinical literature. "Those," they affirm, "never saw sorrow who had not seen Israel during the time that the high priest was absent in the sanctuary; and those never saw joy who had not seen Israel when he came forth to bless the people." So that the enlightened portion of the community deeply felt the importance of the question at issue, namely: whether the sacrifice would be rejected, and the high priest perish in the Divine presence; or whether his sacrifice would be accepted, and he be spared to come forth and dispense blessing to the people. Nor need we wonder at their concern, when we remember the manner in which this institution was first appointed: "And the Lord spake to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the Lord and died, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy-seat which is upon the ark; that *he die not*." "And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat that is upon the testimony, that *HE DIE NOT*." Lev. xvi, 1, 2, 13. So that it was after the two sons of Aaron had perished in an improper attempt to come before the Lord, that the appointment was first made; and every stage of the proceeding was guarded by the solemn caution, "that he die not," clearly showing the deep and serious character of the whole service.

Thus did the ancient Israel worship God according to his own appointment. And thus did he, according to the word of his promise, hear their prayer, pardon their sin, and pour upon them Divine blessing. In this manner did he meet with them, and commune with them, from above the mercy-seat, from between the cherubim which were on the ark of the testimony.

It is easy to perceive that these sacred ordinances gave the ancient Israelites privileges of a very high order. In addition to all the other advantages afforded by their peculiar civil and ecclesiastical polity, these means of solemn worship, this privilege of direct access unto God, supplied to all the means of individual enlightenment, blessing, and spiritual elevation, and raised them as a people to a state of transcendent happiness, security, and honor. Well might Moses, when he saw the whole of the religious apparatus in action, exclaim, "What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for?" "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord!" Deut. iv, 7; xxxiii, 29.

II. We have now to consider the second thing proposed in this discourse, namely, to ascertain the true relation of these sacred things and sacred services to the great truths, facts, and privileges of the Gospel, and the extent to which the latter continue to be illustrated and enforced by the former.

We have hitherto regarded the sacred tabernacle and its appointed services, as means divinely ordained to impress upon the mind of his ancient people the great truths connected with man's access unto God through propitiatory sacrifice, by the representation of visible things and external action, more effectually than could have been done by literal description or merely didactic injunction. We have now to consider the spiritual truths thus shadowed forth.

It is not necessary for us to raise the question which has been so fully and so ably discussed by Dr. Fairbairn, namely, whether any Old Testament person or thing should be regarded as a type of Gospel truth or blessing, which is not specially stated to be such in the pages of Holy Scripture; for the tabernacle is stated in the Epistle to the Hebrews to have been "a figure for the time then present;" and also it and its furniture are said to have been "figures of the true," or "heavenly places." Whatever uncertainty may therefore arise

in respect to other alleged types, there can be nothing of the kind here, as the whole scope of the apostle's reasoning on the subject (Heb. ix) sufficiently proves.

It is, however, not only necessary to ascertain clearly that the sacred sanctuary, its furniture and appendages, were typical, but to discover their precise typical import. Most persons are aware that the mode of allegorizing, of finding mystical senses to Scriptural incidents, and discovering parallelisms between Old Testament history and Gospel truth, has been carried to such an extreme, not to say ridiculous extent, even from the days of Origen to the present time, that sober-minded Christians have not unfrequently been led to regard with a loathing nearly approaching to disgust any attempt to explain the typical import of Old Testament things.

While this state of feeling should not deter us from careful and devout investigations of the true meaning of Holy Scripture, nor from recognizing and endeavoring to understand the exact intent and purpose of these figurative and typical things, which were divinely appointed under the Mosaic economy to shadow forth the great verities of the scheme of redemption; it should teach us extreme caution in every attempt to explain the spiritual import of those types and figures, and guard us against all approach to fanciful and speculative expositions.

We have an opportunity of testing the soundness of our opinions at the very outset of our attempt. For we find our view of the typical import of the tabernacle itself very different from the exposition of Dr. Fairbairn, as given in his elaborate work, "The Typology of Scripture." This learned author, after careful preliminary investigation, propounds the question, "Of what, then, was the tabernacle a type?" Which he answers by saying, "Plainly of Christ, as God manifest in the flesh, and reconciling flesh to God."—*Ibid.*, v. ii, p. 236. Now it is not intended to deny that some of the reasons assigned for this judgment have weight and cogency; and it is fully admitted that the Saviour spoke of his body as "the



temple." (John ii, 19.) But this does not seem sufficient to identify the incarnate Saviour with the great antitype of the Hebrew sanctuary. The priesthood in general, or at least the high priest, is admitted on all hands to have been an eminent type of Christ. But then, what harmony or consistency can be ascribed to these divinely appointed figures, if the tabernacle, and the high priest who ministered in it, had the same individual antitype? If, therefore, the tabernacle is regarded as typical of the Lord Jesus as God-Man, we think it can only be in an isolated and secondary sense. There appears abundant reason for concluding that this was not the typical import of this text, when regarded as a part of the symbolical system of the Hebrews.

Guided by the explicit teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews, it appears to us that the Hebrew sanctuary was eminently typical of heaven; not of heaven merely as a place of glory and the seat of the Divine presence, but as the place where God is revealed for the purpose of carrying into full effect the great work of man's redemption through the vicarious sacrifice of Christ.

Let this conclusion be submitted to the test of Holy Scripture. The tabernacle was certainly raised to provide a seat for the Divine presence. "Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them." Exod. xxv, 8. "I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God." Exod. xxix, 45. Numerous other passages might be cited in proof, but it is unnecessary.

Further, this inhabitation of the tabernacle by the Divine presence was for the purpose of opening up an intercourse between Israel and the Lord. "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony." Exod. xxv, 22. It is freely admitted that the presence of the Lord was manifested here as the King of Israel, and that he was, although in a manner not now

clearly understood, accessible to his people. But it is equally clear that the grand purpose for which the shekinah of God dwelt between the cherubim in the most holy sanctuary, was to provide a means by which atonement might be made for the sins of the people through the blood of sacrifice. It was for the great day of atonement that the most holy place was specially prepared. On that day only was it entered, and then by the high priest alone, who, by the sprinkled blood of the sacrificed victims, made an atonement for all the sins of all the people.

These facts are all-important to a right apprehension of the typical import of these sacred things. It is, however, of equal consequence, that we attend to the inspired commentary which is given us in the Epistle to the Hebrews on these Old Testament truths.

The first point that the apostle insists on is this: that the division of the tabernacle into two apartments, and the perfect exclusion of all the priests but the high priest from the inner sanctuary, and his admission there but once in the year, was intended by the Holy Ghost to show that even these holy and divinely appointed services were merely typical and preparatory, and did not, therefore, accomplish all that the mercy of God designed to communicate to mankind; that, in fact, the good derived from them was deficient in nature and in degree. It "could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience." Heb. ix, 9. That is, no observance of this ritual service could assure the conscience of the worshiper that his sin was certainly pardoned. Nor did it open up unto him a free access unto the Divine presence. And as the apostle had previously showed that the purpose of God in redemption was to communicate pardon, and to bring man into union with himself, (Heb. viii, 8-13,) it clearly followed, that the services which failed to accomplish this could only be preparatory and typical, "figures for the time then present."

Having established this point, the sacred writer proceeds to show what these typical institutions were intended to shadow forth; and, in doing so, fully establishes the proposition we have laid down. Referring to the particular description which he had given of the tabernacle, and of its sacred things, and of their dedication to God by the blood of sprinkling, he says, "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Heb. ix, 23, 24.

The whole scope of this passage proves that the Hebrew tabernacle was an earthly type of a heavenly sanctuary; that, as in the former the high priest, by the sprinkling of the blood of bullocks and goats, obtained a ritual pardon for the sins of Israel, so, in the latter, the High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, by the offering of his own blood, obtained eternal redemption for us, and purged our conscience from dead works to serve the living God; that, as the high priest entered into the most holy place of the Hebrew sanctuary to make an atonement for his people, so Christ has passed "into heaven itself," "to appear in the presence of God for us," as our High Priest and Intercessor; and that the earthly sanctuary and its sacred services, especially that of the great day of atonement, the only time when the most holy place was entered by the high priest, were "patterns of things in the heavens, types of what really exists on high, and of the means by which the great process of redemption is carried into operation in the presence of God.

It will be necessary to amplify this position by a careful reference to the prominent details of the subject; and this will afford us an opportunity of decisively testing, illustrating, and confirming the proposition we have laid down.

The Hebrew tabernacle was the dwelling-place of God:

he dwelt between the cherubim in the most holy place. So the Lord is in heaven, and there pre-eminently displays the glory of his presence. But God did not inhabit the sanctuary merely as a resident, but for the purpose of carrying out the great designs of his grace. So in heaven God reigns until all the enmity of sin shall be destroyed, and death itself shall die. Accordingly, in the Hebrew sanctuary, there was the ark of the covenant, which contained the tables of the law. As this was a pattern, or figure, of heavenly things, it clearly shows that the glorious revelation of God in heaven which his word displays, is made in reference to his covenant relation to us; and that the basis of all his dealings with our nature is the law which he ordained as a rule of life for man.

Let us endeavor to realize the importance of this fact. The uniform tendency of Satanic influence and human depravity is to create an impression that the effect of redemption is to diminish the obligation of the Divine law, to remove its penalties, and, to some extent at least, to release mankind from its claims. Yet what, in respect to such errors, is the teaching of these types? They show us that God, even when sitting on his throne as the covenanted Head of his Church, has the law immediately and prominently before him; that, indeed, the law is the center and the substance of the whole economy of grace; that the object of redemption is not to bring down the law to our depravity, but to crane up human nature to its purity.

But the process of redemption contemplates man as a sinner, while it fully sustains the authority and purity of the law. We accordingly find that the typical arrangements of the sanctuary were fully adapted to meet the exigency of this case. A covering was prepared for the ark of the covenant which contained the law; a covering not intended to shut up the law from the all-seeing eye of God, but a covering in the sense of atonement. The word (*caporeth*) which is employed to designate this lid of the ark, "is never used for a covering in the

ordinary sense ; wherever it occurs, it is only for the name of this one article, a name which it derived from being peculiarly and pre-eminently the place where covering or atonement was made for the sins of the people." There was here, therefore, in the very name, an indication of the real meaning of the symbol, as the kind of covering expressed by it is covering only in the spiritual sense, atonement. Yet while the name properly conveys this meaning, it was not given without some respect also to the external position of the article in question, which was immediately above and upon, not the ark merely, but the tables of the testimony within. "And thou shalt put the mercy-seat upon the ark of the testimony." Exod. xxvi, 34. "The mercy-seat that is over the testimony." xxx, 6. "That the cloud of incense may cover the mercy-seat that is upon the testimony." Lev. xvi, 13. The tables of the covenant contained God's testimony, not simply for holiness in general, but for holiness as opposed to his people's transgressions—his testimony against them on account of sin; and as they could not stand before it when thundered in terrific majesty in their ears from Mount Sinai, neither could they spiritually stand before the accusations which it was constantly raising against them in the presence of God in the most holy place. A covering was therefore needed for them, between it on the one hand, and God on the other; but an *atonement* covering. A mere external covering would not do; for the searching, all-seeing eye of Jehovah was there, from which nothing outward can conceal; and the law itself also, from which the covering was needed, is spiritual, reaching to the inmost thoughts of the heart, as well as to every action of the life. That the mercy-seat stood over the testimony, and shut it out from the bodily eye, was a kind of shadow of the provision required; but still, even under that dispensation, no more than the shadow, and fitted not properly to be, but only to suggest what was really required, namely, a covering in the sense of atonement. The covering required must be a propiti-



atory, a place on which the holy eye of God may ever see the blood of reconciliation; and the most holy place, as designated from it, and deriving thence its most essential characteristic, might fitly be called "the house of the propitiatory," or the "atonement-house." 1 Chron. xxviii, 2. (See Fairbairn's *Typology*, vol. ii, p. 300.)

How strikingly all this sets forth in visible representation what takes place in the heavenly sanctuary! There God sits enthroned in his infinite holiness, there he has under his eye his Divine law, there its testimony against the sins of mankind is heard, and there the provision for an efficient atonement has been made.

We, however, must follow out still further the details of this typical arrangement. The same material which composed the propitiatory, extending beyond the ark on either end, was turned up and formed into cherubic figures. We have already, as far as our means of information will allow, described the form and position of these sacred emblems. The question now presents itself, What was their proper typical import? This is an important question, which I have endeavored to discuss and solve in a separate work, (*The Doctrine of the Cherubim*), and which, therefore, I will here very briefly consider.

It was supposed by a few learned men in the last century, (the Hutchinsonians,) that the cherubim were intended to exhibit the triune personality of Deity. As if God, after having laid it down as a primary law for his people, "Thou shalt not make to thyself the likeness of anything that is in the heavens above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth," should immediately enjoin the violation of his own precept! As though the grand institution specially provided by God as a protest against idolatry, should be ushered into operation by having consecrated images of Deity set up in the most holy place! This and other grave objections to the theory have all but completely extinguished it. In the present

day it is seldom advocated, and is fast passing into merited oblivion.

Another notion, and one which has obtained extensive credence, respecting the cherubim, is, that they symbolized angels, and set forth angelic ministration in connection with the people of God. We have, in a preceding address, given our reasons for repudiating this opinion, which, in fact, as well as the notion previously referred to, would make the command to form the cherubim a violation of the second commandment. The Divine law which said, "Thou shalt not make to thee the likeness of anything in the heavens above," must have prevented them from putting images of angel forms in the sanctuary.

What, then, did the cherubim of the sanctuary typically set forth? We have no doubt that the proper and truthful answer to this question is this: They set forth redeemed human nature. If this is not the case, we have the strange anomaly that, in all this wide scope of typical arrangement, our nature does not at all appear. It is vain to say, as some have hastily said, that our nature was represented in the person of the high priest. It was not. The high priest did not enter into the most holy place representing the redeemed, but as an eminent type of the Redeemer. The fact is, therefore, as we have stated it, that if the cherubim did not symbolize the nature of the redeemed, that nature was not represented. Here, then, on this assumption, we have the Divine presence in the shekinah of glory, the law, its covering as the place of the atonement, but with no result indicated or set forth. But if our view is correct, then this glorious issue is placed before our eye with the utmost strength and beauty. Then we see our nature rising up out of an applied atonement, made the habitation of the Divine presence, bathed and crowned with his glory, showing forth, in its highest degree, the glorious efficacy of this redeeming process.

But it will be said, "This is an assumption without proof."

To some extent it is so; but although we refer those who prefer a consecutive discussion of the subject to the little work already named, it is not intended here to leave this important point altogether unsupported by evidence. But this must be adduced as the nature of our present engagement will allow. We must therefore request the reader to assume for the present a fact which will be fully discussed and established in the following discourses, namely, that the seraphim of Isaiah, the cherubim of Ezekiel, and the "four beasts" or "living creatures" of the book of Revelation, are all identical in object and design with the cherubim of the sanctuary and of Eden.

This being done, we direct attention to the exhibition afforded in the last book of the sacred canon. When John was favored with a view of the Divine Majesty in heavenly glory, he tells us, that "he that sat upon the throne was like a jasper and a sardine stone; and there was a rainbow round about the throne." Rev. iv, 3. We can scarcely err in the exposition of this passage. The apostle saw a glory on the throne; but it was an undefined glory, like that issuing from radiant precious stones. "And there was a rainbow round about the throne:" language which clearly intimates that the vision exhibits something incomplete or unfinished, which God had promised to bring to pass. The rainbow was first mentioned as a visible sign that the word of God should not fail. And here it is certainly to be regarded as a similar pledge. We are then informed that round about the throne were four cherubic figures, instinct with life, and imbued with mind and power. With these there appeared twenty-four elders on seats around the throne. These pour out unceasing ascriptions of praise and glory to Him that sat upon the throne. Then we are told of the sealed book, and the consternation occasioned by the absence of any one worthy to unloose the seals and to open the book. At length it was proclaimed, that "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, had prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven

seals thereof." Immediately on this, we are informed that all that was predictive and obscure in the appearance of the throne passed away. We hear no more of the rainbow, or of the undefined glory; but in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, (v. 6,) invested with the attributes of almighty power, and endowed with all the plenitude of the Holy Spirit. Surely there can be no difficulty in understanding these symbolical representations. They can refer to nothing but a representation of the efficient atonement of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, as antitypical of what had been so long celebrated in the Mosaic tabernacle. Accordingly, the four cherubic creatures, and the four-and-twenty elders, are immediately described as singing a new song, saying: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests." v. 9, 10. This passage clearly establishes two positions: first, that this scene does represent the presentation in heaven of the great atonement of Jesus Christ; and, secondly, that the cherubic creatures, with the twenty-four elders, represent the universal Church. For they distinctly say, that they are redeemed out of every "kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Nor is there any lack of precision in this language. For immediately afterward these are joined by a multitude of angels, who together hymn a general ascription of praise to the "Lamb that was slain;" but there is in this no such expression of having been redeemed as in the former case. Angels, indeed, could not sing the song which was sung by the cherubim and elders.

From the same source we are informed of the typical import of the burning incense. In another part of the Apocalypse (viii, 3, 4) we read: "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto

him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand." Thus, we perceive, in all respects the heavenly sanctuary of realities corresponded to the earthly tabernacle of type and figure. As on earth the people prayed while the priest in the temple burnt incense on the golden altar, (Luke i, 10, 11,) so in heaven the prayers of the saints ascend up before God.

We have thus seen that the inner sanctuary of the Hebrew tabernacle existed principally for the services of the great day of atonement, and that the services of that day eminently set forth the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us now trace the connection of the type and antitype, as exhibited in the narrative of our Saviour's sufferings. It will be remembered that the most holy place was dark; that it had, indeed, no means of illumination but the shekinah of God resting over the wings of the cherubim; so that when this was not radiant with blessing, or was altogether absent, as in the second temple, total darkness prevailed.

In contemplating the offering up of the world's Sacrifice, we are affected by the manner in which the initiatory rite was performed, or rather at the extent to which it was neglected. The revelations of holy prophecy had marked out, in a wonderfully explicit and graphic manner, the sufferings and death of God's Messiah. The period of his coming, and the proofs of his true vocation, were unmistakable. Yet when the victim was being prepared for the sacrifice, who gathered around the sanctuary to pray? His select disciples slept! How few at all apprehended the true character of the mighty act on which the weal of a world depended! No! instead of offering incense and prayer, the crowd, with ruffianly fury, clamored for his blood. Yet, few as they were, there were some whose souls were absorbed in the terrible struggle, and whose prayers in intense earnestness ascended unto God.



The sacrificial offering up of the Son of God must be regarded as beginning in Gethsemane. He had, indeed, previously offered his great sacrificial prayer, (John xvii, 1-12,) and prayed for the unity of his disciples. (13-26.) And when he had "spoken these words, and they had sung a hymn, he went forth over the brook Cedron, and went, as he was wont, to the Mount of Olives." Having had an interesting conversation there with his disciples, he proceeded from thence to the garden of Gethsemane, where "he began to be sorrowful, sore amazed, and very heavy. And he went forward a little, and kneeled down, and fell on his face on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee : O my Father, if it be possible, take away this cup, and let it pass from me : nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt. And again, the second time, he spake the same words, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he prayed the third time, saying the same words : Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me : nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly : and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Matt. xxvi, 36-46; Mark xiv, 32-42; Luke xxii, 40-46; John xviii, 1.

How marvellous is the scene which these words bring before the mind ! Here is the Son of God, he before whose word the storm is hushed into peace, and the rolling billows of the deep sink into quietude. This is the person who gave health to the sick and life to the dead, and before whom trembling devils shrank in fear and terror. Yet the God-man now prays in an agony. Nay, more, his sweat is blood. Before the scourges lacerate his back, or the nails or spear pierce his flesh, we see the bloodshedding of the Son of God. It is a fact well worthy of the most serious consideration, that the

sacrificial work of Christ began without the instrumentality of second causes. "It pleased the Lord to bruise him ; he hath put him to grief ; the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isa. liii, 6-10. The thrice-repeated appeal to his Father's will was responded to by such an overwhelming infliction, that the blood started through the pores of his unwounded body ; and probably, but for the strength supplied by angelic ministration, his animal frame had perished under the crushing weight of the Divine justice, vicariously sustained for the sins of mankind, before his body had touched the cross. Thus the sacrificial oblation of the Saviour began, not as the result of human or hellish rage, but as the immediate and direct consequence of the Divine purpose.

From this garden, where his passion began, the Saviour was taken to judgment and crucifixion. We need not detail the mock trial, the shame and spitting, the smiting the lamb-like sufferer with the palms of their hands, or the scourging. All took place ; and the cumulative weight of woe was sustained, until it was finished in the death of the victim, and Christ poured out his soul as a sacrifice for sin.

But let us mark the correspondence between the type and the antitype. As the high-priest entered into the darkness of the inner sanctuary, so Christ called the season of his passion, "the hour and power of darkness." And to give increasing significance to the circumstance, as the Saviour drew near the climax of his suffering, darkness covered the earth ; the world was made a sacred sanctuary for the sacrifice of God's dear Son ; and thus it continued until the offering was completed, when the darkness instantly departed, and, as if to mark unmistakably the connection, the darkness of the holy place departed at the same moment. For "the vail of the temple was rent in twain in the midst from the top to the bottom," and the light of heaven shone into the most holy place.

But this action did not terminate the redeeming work of Christ. We can easily trace the vicarious character of the Son

of God in his incarnation; for in this it is manifest, "that he who was rich for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich." This vicarious character is equally evident in his sufferings and death; for there could be no other cause for his pain. No inward remorse disturbed his mind; no outward sin exposed him to the endurance of evil. It is therefore certain that he lived for us, and that he died for us. And here many Christian people terminate the vicarious action of the Saviour; but very unwisely, and to their spiritual loss. The words to which reference has been made, correct this misapprehension: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Heb. ix, 24.

So that, as the high priest passed into the inner sanctuary with the reeking blood of the animal victim to atone for the sins of the people, Christ passed into the heavens with his own blood, making an everlasting atonement for sin. What the high priest on earth did in type and figure, Christ effected in full and glorious reality; for having, by "better sacrifices," "offered himself without spot unto God," he purges our consciences "from dead works to serve the living God."

The antitype, therefore, fully covers all that the type signified and shadowed forth. For, as by the offering of the high priest all who complied with the requirements of the law obtained a ceremonial justification, so Christ has obtained for every one who believes in him a real, experimental, evangelical righteousness. The effects of this sacrifice are no less lasting than real. The high-priest, having completed his task, retired from the sanctuary, and a new course of impurity and transgression at once began to accumulate, and to require a new sacrifice the ensuing year for their purgation. But Christ, having presented a perfect atonement for sin, has by that "*one offering* perfected forever them that are sanctified,"

and opened a perpetual way to pardon and purity for all mankind. This is indicated in the sacred text by a very striking phrase. Hence we are taught to come to God by the blood of Jesus; and this blood is emphatically called "the blood of sprinkling." The meaning is this: "The life is in the blood;" and, therefore, "it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul," (Lev. xvii, 11,) because it is the offering up of the life to God. Hence on all occasions the sacrificial blood is sprinkled, because, while the life is in it, it is fluid, and will sprinkle; but when the life has departed and the blood is coagulated, it is unfit for sacrificial purposes, it cannot be sprinkled. But the blood of Christ ever retains its virtue; always atones for sin; is as prevalent now, and will be to the end of time, on the day when it was shed on Calvary. It is therefore emphatically called "the blood of *sprinkling*."

The privileges of the Gospel, however, are not only real and permanent, in opposition to the ritual and temporary blessings given by the Old Testament service; they go beyond all that was typified; so that the typical system had, in great measure, to be for a while suspended, in order to show forth to the worshipers under that dispensation any idea of the extent of Gospel blessing. But as this will be considered at length in the next discourse, we will here only observe, that these typical services offered the individual Hebrew no direct access unto God. The high priest went, year by year, into the inner sanctuary, and stood in the Divine presence; but he alone; the people never did, and, under that ritual economy, never could.

For us, thank God, the vail is rent, is removed, and a way of access is opened, by which every faithful soul may stand in the most holy place, and rejoice in the presence of God. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his

flesh; and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith." Heb. x, 19-22. Guided by the revelations of God's word, and strengthened by this living faith, we may thus come to God, although the sanctuary in which he sits enthroned is in the heavens. Yet even there our eye of faith can penetrate; there we can see the heavenly propitiatory with the blood of the Lamb that was slain; there our vivified nature, in cherubic form, everlastingly hymns the praises of our Redeemer; there we realize the High Priest of our profession, who ever liveth to make intercession for us. And as the ancient Hebrews rejoiced at the shining forth of the glorious shekinah, so may our spirits feel, while contemplating this heavenly light, that our treasure and our heart are there; and, armed by Divine love, and lit up by the coruscations of glory which radiate from that throne of grace, we may even here exultingly exclaim:

"The opening heavens around me shine  
With beams of sacred bliss,  
If Jesus shows his mercy mine,  
And whispers I ~~am~~ his."



## DISCOURSE IV.

## THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID.

In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.—Amos ix, 11.

THE result of all our preceding inquiries has been to place before us a great and extensive system of means, intended to afford fallen man a way of access to God. These means appear to have been introduced almost immediately after the fall, and to have been fully developed under the Levitical economy. They seem to have been so designed as to have afforded, throughout these successive ages, a suitable way of worship for penitent sinners, and at the same time, by their typical character, to shed a very important light on the great process of redeeming grace. They were figures, “for the time then present,” of “good things to come.”

We have now to consider a very extraordinary suspension of the most important part of this typical system; apparently for the purpose of affording spiritually minded Hebrews higher religious privileges than they could obtain under the rigid letter of their established ritual, and thereby to foreshadow, in a fuller degree than could otherwise be done, the higher glory of Gospel blessing.

In order to our obtaining a full acquaintance with this subject, it is proposed:

I. To ascertain what we are to understand by “the tabernacle of David.”

II. To consider the peculiar means of worship and privilege afforded by this sanctuary, and then to regard it as the subject of sacred prophecy.

III. It will be necessary for us to observe the application made of this subject by the united apostles and believers at Jerusalem, and to collect the information afforded thereby respecting the character and constitution of the Christian Church.

I. We have in the first place to ascertain what we are to understand by "the tabernacle of David."

What does this phrase mean? To what fact or thing do the words refer? If we look for aid to commentators, the result is singularly unsatisfactory and embarrassing. Lowth on the text says: "At that time I will restore the kingdom to the house and family of David in the person of the Messias, so often styled in the prophets the Seed or Offspring of David, and known by that title by the Jews of our Saviour's age. And whereas that family had been, for several years before his coming, reduced to a mean and obscure condition, it shall now recover its ancient splendor and dignity. 'The tabernacle of David' is an expression met with but twice in the Scripture, here and in Isaiah xvi, 5. It may allude to his having been a shepherd, and dwelling in tents, before he was advanced to a kingdom, but since that reduced to as low a condition as it was at first: but I conceive the phrase does mystically denote the Church, whereof the Messiah, here foretold, was to be the Head; which is elsewhere styled 'God's tabernacle,' as being a place of his especial residence, as the tabernacle in the wilderness was."

The Rev. Joseph Benson on the place observes: "This promise seems, at least in the first place, to be intended of the return of the Jews from the land of their captivity, their re-establishment in Judea, rebuilding Jerusalem, and attaining to that height of power and glory which they enjoyed in the days of the Maccabees. This prophecy must also be extended to the days of the Messiah, and to the calling of the Gentiles to the knowledge of the true God."

Dr. Adam Clarke delivers his judgment on the text thus:

“The prophecy remains to be fulfilled. It must, therefore, refer to their (the Jews’) restoration under the Gospel. The Jews shall be converted and restored, and this text in both Covenants is a proof of it.”

The Rev. J. M. Ray, in his Translation of the Holy Scriptures, applies the prophecy to the millennium.

And finally, Whitby, on the quotation of this passage, Acts xv, 16, observes: “Hence the Jews called the Messiah *Bar Naphli*, because it is written, ‘I will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down.’ Amos ix, 10, 11. The most ancient way of dwelling being in tents and tabernacles, a man’s house or habitation is usually in that language called *mischeneah*, his ‘tabernacle,’ as you may see in the Book of Job, and in the prophets: so here, ‘the tabernacle of David’ is the house and family of David.”

Here we have certainly a variety of meaning sufficient to gratify almost any taste; but the man who can elicit a distinct and intelligible sense of the text from these conflicting interpretations, must have a mind singularly gifted. It will only be necessary for us to make a brief remark on the first and last of these extracts.

Bishop Lowth supposes the phrase to refer to David’s pastoral life. This is simply a random guess, without a shadow of proof. Beyond this, his view is almost identical with that which Whitby has endeavored to establish, but unhappily with little success. The latter says, “The most ancient way of dwelling being in tents and tabernacles, a man’s house or habitation is usually in the Hebrew language called *mischeneah*, his ‘tabernacle.’” This statement is undoubtedly correct; but it does not prove that the application of the term to the name of a person *must* be taken in its figurative sense, as his family or house, and not literally as meaning his tabernacle. So that, admitting the learned commentator’s premises, the case is by no means settled. At the utmost we can only infer, that when we read of a man’s (*mishkan*, or) tabernacle, it may seem

either his family or his habitation; but which of these is really intended must be determined by the context, and the scope of the writer. In citing this word, however, Whitby is palpably incorrect. Seeing the word "tabernacle" in the English version, he hastily concluded that the usual word for "tabernacle" in the original, namely, *mishkan*, was the word employed by Amos, without troubling himself to examine the Hebrew text of the prophet, to verify his conjecture. He has, consequently, misled his readers. Amos did not write *mishkan* for "tabernacle," but *sukkah*, which is never employed to signify "house" in the sense of "family," as the preceding term is; so that the prophet, passing by the ordinary word which was capable of a double meaning, went out of his way to select a term of such strict and limited sense as could only mean "tent," or "tabernacle," and so rendered misapprehension of his language, when properly considered, impossible. The most careful examination of the words used by the prophet, therefore, as well as all the renderings of them found in Scripture, limits the meaning of the text strictly to the tabernacle of David. (See *Appendix*, note 15.)

But the question returns to us, What are we to understand by this language? A brief inquiry will solve the difficulty. We are informed that after the Hebrews had crossed the Jordan, the tabernacle of Moses was set up at Gilgal, where it remained during the life of Joshua. It was afterward removed to Shiloh, in the tribe of Ephraim, where it stood during the high-priesthood of Eli. In his time a most unexpected calamity befell this sanctuary. Harassed by the increasing power of the Philistines, and weakened by their own shameful idolatry and wickedness, the Israelites, hoping to intimidate their foes, and to give courage and energy to their own warriors, took the ark of God from the tabernacle, and carried it to the field of battle. The result is well known. The Lord took this opportunity of impressing upon his people the great truth, (a dearly-bought lesson,) that nothing but heart-service avails

with God ; that the most sacred and divinely appointed things are of no avail, if borne in impure hands. Israel was routed ; the two priests who accompanied the ark were slain, and the ark itself was taken and carried into the land of the Philistines.

Here the presence of God went with the sacred symbol of his covenant. Jehovah vindicated his own honor, and soon taught the proud Philistines that, if they had vanquished the Hebrews, they were impotent before the God of the Hebrews. After having been detained in Philistia seven months, the ark was sent back to the Israelites in a manner which added another proof of God's faithfulness and covenant mercy.

When the sacred ark was thus returned to the land of Israel, it might naturally have been supposed that it would have been immediately taken to the tabernacle, and enshrined in the most holy place, from which it had been abstracted. But this reasonable expectation was never realized. It has justly been regarded as one of the most remarkable facts in Old Testament history, that the ark was never restored to the Mosaic tabernacle. If we trace it from the time of its return from Philistia, we find that when the prying curiosity of the men of Beth-shemesh had been severely punished, they invited those of Kirjath-jearim to come and fetch the ark from thence : they did so, and placed it "in the house of Abinadab in the hill;" and he, being a Levite, "sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord." 1 Sam. vii, 1. Here the ark remained for eighty years. (*Hale's Analysis*, vol. ii, p. 331.) Throughout this long period we have no satisfactory proof that it was ever removed. There is an intimation that the ark was with Saul at Gibeah ; (1 Sam. xiv, 18;) but this appears to be contradicted by another text. (1 Chron. xiii, 3.) However this may be, if it was at all removed, it had again been returned to the house of Abinadab ; for it was there during the early part of the reign of David. This circumstance assumes a serious



aspect, if the revelation of the Divine will respecting his sanctuary be fairly considered. Moses had declared to the Israelites, just before his death: "When ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the Lord your God giveth you to inherit, then there shall be a place which the Lord your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; even unto his habitation shalt thou seek, and thither shalt thou come." Deut. xii, 5, 11. According to this prediction the Lord selected Gilgal, and apparently soon afterward, Shiloh, ■ the place of his sanctuary. (Jer. vii, 12.) And there it was set up by Joshua. (Joshua xviii, 1.) By the circumstances we have detailed, the ark was permanently removed from Shiloh, which pertained to the tribe of Ephraim, to Kirjath-jearim in the tribe of Judah; and what is further observable, during the stay of the ark in this place, the Mosaic tabernacle itself was removed from Shiloh to Gibeon in the tribe of Benjamin.

When the son of Jesse ascended the throne, the tabernacle and the ark occupied these respective positions. This pious prince, having subdued his enemies on every side, was enabled to direct his attention to the internal economy of his kingdom. And one of the first objects which engaged his concern was the situation of the ark of God, which he accordingly determined to remove. But here we meet with ■ repetition of the extraordinary fact to which we have above directed attention. It does not seem that David ever contemplated the restoration of the ark to what appeared to be its proper and true location in the most holy place of the Mosaic sanctuary; but, on the contrary, built ■ new tabernacle for its reception near to his own house on Mount Zion. Having obtained the ready co-operation of his people, he proceeded, with great pomp, to carry his project into execution. In doing this, however, the divinely prescribed mode for carrying the ark when it was removed, appears to have been strangely forgotten. (Num. iv, 2-15; Deut. x, 8.) Instead of its being borne by its staves by the

priests, it was placed on a new cart, and drawn by oxen. During the process of this transit the oxen stumbled, and shook the ark, on which Uzzah, the son of Abinadab, put forth his hand to steady it; and this being a direct violation of Divine law, the Lord "smote him there for his error, and there he died by the ark of God." 2 Sam. vi, 7. This infliction so terrified David, that he desisted from his purpose, and placed the ark in the house of Obed-Edom, a Levite, who resided near the place of the disaster.

In this new resting-place the ark continued three months, when, it being reported to David that God had greatly blessed Obed-Edom and all his household because of the ark of God, the king was encouraged to complete his design, and the ark was at length placed in the tabernacle which David had prepared for it on Mount Zion, to the great joy of the people and the intense gratification of the king, (2 Sam. vi; 1 Chron. xv, 25-29; xvi, 1.) In this tabernacle, immediately before the ark, King David and the pious Hebrews of his day worshiped God. While the services prescribed in the Hebrew ritual were duly performed in the Mosaic tabernacle at Gibeon, as far, at least, as this could be done in the absence of the ark, a simple and spiritual worship was presented to God in the tabernacle on Mount Zion. Nor was this an ephemeral suspension of the ordinary course of the Mosaic ceremonial law. It continued throughout about thirty years of the reign of David, and until the third year of the reign of Solomon. For when this sovereign had finished his temple, he, with great solemnity, took the ark from the tabernacle on Mount Zion, and placed it in the sacred oracle of the new sanctuary. (See *Appendix*, note 16.)

This tabernacle of David was therefore a great historical fact; its sacred worship and hallowed privileges were associated with the best feelings of the most pious and devoted men of that age; and the memory of it, and of its results, would, therefore, naturally become deeply imbedded in the religious

history of the Hebrew people. Is it not, then, truly wonderful that when, some two hundred years after the death of Solomon, inspired prophets speak of *the tabernacle of David*, commentators should feel so intensely puzzled as to the subject referred to? one thinking the words apply to the pastoral life of the son of Jesse, another to his family, a third to the restoration of the Jews under Cyrus, a fourth to the calling of the Gentiles, and a fifth to the millennium, not to mention others; all forgetting that there was indeed a tabernacle of David, which made a most conspicuous figure in the history and religion of the times, and which, from the extraordinary exception which it formed to the usual operation of the Mosaic ritual, was most likely to be found in the traditions of the people, and to be referred to by the inspired prophets. With these facts before us, can any one doubt that Amos alluded to this literal tabernacle of David? To our mind this seems as self-evident as that any allusion found in the prophets to the temple refers to the temple of Solomon. Here, then, is the tabernacle of David.

II. We have to consider the peculiar means of worship and privilege afforded by this sanctuary, and to regard it as the subject of sacred prophecy.

It is scarcely possible to find a more neglected, or a more important portion of scriptural inquiry than this.

We have a very particular account of the arrangements made for the conducting of religious worship in David's tabernacle, and a full description of the opening service. From these we obtain important information, which, together with what may be gleaned from other sources, will afford a correct and tolerably full account of the religious character of this sanctuary.

In the first instance, we have to inquire into the position which the ark occupied in this sacred place. It does not appear that the tabernacle of David was divided into apartments, or that it had, in any respect, any part corresponding

to the most holy place of the Mosaic sanctuary. On the contrary, all the statements found in Scripture respecting the subject go to prove that the tabernacle was one large apartment, and that the people worshiped immediately before the ark of God. We are told, most explicitly and particularly, "And they brought in the ark of the Lord, and set it in his place in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it." 2 Sam. vi, 17. Nearly the same words are repeated by another inspired writer, who also adds, that certain of the Levites were appointed "to minister before the ark of the Lord." 1 Chron. xvi, 1-4. This is said again: "So he left there, before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, Asaph and his brethren, to minister before the ark continually." Verse 37.

Let me call attention to this important fact, that the ark of the covenant with its golden cherubim, the seat of the shekinah of God, was here placed in the open vision of the people, who, with free access, there worshiped before the Lord. The ark, which had before been kept in the sacred seclusion of the most holy place, to which no one but the high priest, and he only once in the year, could approach, was thus made fully accessible to every worshiper. To what extent the shekinah at this time appeared over, or between, the cherubim, we are not informed; but its connection with them is clearly recognized; for when the removal of the ark from Kirjath-jearim is first mentioned in Scripture, it is in these words: "And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the Lord of Hosts that dwelleth between the cherubim." 2 Sam. vi, 2. So that there appears no reason to doubt that the ark, the cherubim, and the Divine glory, appeared in the tabernacle of David, as they had previously in the Mosaic sanctuary, as the seat of the Divine presence. And this view seems to be fully confirmed by the language of the pious king, when driven from this sanctuary by the rebellion of Absalom. "My soul," he says, "thirsteth

for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" Psalm xlii, 2. (See, also, 2 Sam. xv, 25, where it is called the "habitation" of God.)

We next direct attention to the ministers of this tabernacle; and here another remarkable fact meets us: they were not priests. In the midst of the Hebrew church, whose priesthood was appointed immediately by God, and charged with the great duty of officiating between him and his people, we see the most sacred symbol of the Levitical economy, the seat of his glory, made accessible to the people, without even the medium of a priest.

That this was the case, is evident from the account which is so minutely given of the arrangements which were made for the services of this tabernacle. David appointed a ministry to conduct the religious worship of this sanctuary, and to "minister before the ark:" they, however, were not priests, but Levites. (1 Chron. xvi, 4, 5.) Their duty was specially defined. Asaph was the chief; others were associated with him as singers and musicians, and others as porters to attend on different classes of duty. (Verses 37, 38, 41-43.) If the strangeness of this circumstance should lead any one to doubt the accuracy of this statement, a reference to the sacred text (1 Chron. vi, 32-43) will prove that not one of the persons named as appointed to minister in this sanctuary was of the seed of Aaron. Asaph was descended from Gershom, whose brother Kohath was Aaron's grandfather, and Heman from Izhar, the uncle of Aaron. There was, indeed, one exception to this rule, as there was one duty connected with the religious assemblies of the Hebrews which none but priests could perform. It was an established ordinance of Moses, that the people were to be summoned to their religious worship by the sound of trumpets blown by priests. (Num. x, 8; xxxi, 6.) So David appointed Benaiah and Jahaziel "the priests with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God" for this purpose; 1 Chron. xvi, 6;) a measure which showed that, in all his



deviations from the Hebrew ritual, he was very solicitous to adhere to the Mosaic rules as far as possible.

It must not, however, be supposed that the Mosaic sanctuary was abandoned, or that its ritual and sacrificial services were suspended. While making every necessary arrangement for the services of his own tabernacle, David was equally provident as to the maintenance of the divinely appointed worship prescribed by the Mosaic law. Hence we find a statement, parenthetically introduced into the midst of the account given of the provision made for conducting service in the tabernacle of David, of the means then enjoined for insuring the observance of the ritual law in the tabernacle at Gibeon: "And Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests, before the tabernacle of the Lord in the high place that was at Gibeon, to offer burnt-offerings upon the altar of the burnt-offering continually morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in the law of the Lord, which he commanded Israel." 1 Chr. xvi, 39, 40.

We proceed, then, to a most important and interesting element of our inquiry, namely, the manner and nature of the worship which was conducted in this tabernacle. It is thus described in the sacred text: "And he appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of the Lord, and to record, and to thank and praise the Lord God of Israel." 1 Chron. xvi, 4. It is not an easy task to state fully what was at this time comprehended under these terms, "to minister," "to record," and "to bless and praise."

The term rendered "minister," signifies, "to attend on," "to serve." It may here, therefore, be taken to indicate a summary of the duties arising out of the worship conducted in this sanctuary. These Levites were specially placed in charge of this tabernacle, and required to supply all that was necessary for its sacred services. They were, therefore, in the fullest sense of the term, the ministers of this sanctuary.

Besides these general services, the Levites who were appointed to minister in the tabernacle of David, were called to

discharge special and particular duties. The first of these is described in our version as "to record;" a phrase not very intelligible in our language, and therefore far from conveying to our mind at first sight a definite sense. And yet, considering the importance of the subject, and the relation of the word to the worship of this important and interesting sanctuary, it is most desirable that we fully comprehend its import. This word, then, is very frequently, indeed generally, rendered in our authorized version, "to remember. It is the word thus rendered, Eccles. xii, 1; Isa. xxxviii, 3; Jer. xv, 15, and in numerous other texts. But it also means, "to bring to remembrance;" (Isa. xliii, 26; Ezek. xxi, 23;) and in this sense is frequently translated, "to make mention." (Psalm lxxi, 16; Isa. lxiii, 7.) As, therefore, this bringing to remembrance was effected by *vivâ voce* communications, it is rendered in the Septuagint version by a word (*ἀναφωνοῦντας*) which literally means, "to lift up the voice." We have been thus particular in tracing the meaning of this term, because it brings before the mind the Scriptural idea of Old Testament preaching.

The primary sense of the term under consideration leads us to a distinct recognition of God's covenant mercy, as declared in his holy word. This, whether accomplished or promised, is to be brought to remembrance; and then declared for the encouragement and edification of others. Then, again, this subject, whether regarded in respect of the past or of the future, assumes a twofold aspect. It refers to the manifestations of God's covenant mercy, and the development of his grace, whether displayed to the Church, and preserved in its history, or manifested to individuals, and retained in their godly experience. So, as regards the future, the promises of the Lord's covenant mercy would be brought to mind and declared, whether referring to the Church and its interests at large, or to individuals; thus offering to their faith and hope higher and holier spiritual attainments.

We have a striking illustration of this subject, and a confirmation of the views given above, in the beautiful Psalm written by David for the opening service of this sanctuary, and which many learned men believe was continued to be used there at every religious service, (1 Chron. xvi, 7-36:) "Remember the marvelous works that He hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth. Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. Sing unto the Lord, all the earth; show forth from day to day his salvation." Verses 12, 15, 23. This shows how prominently God's covenant mercy to Israel was kept before the people. In the spirit of remembering and recording or publishing the Divine goodness, the royal Psalmist says: "Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." Psalm xl, 5. Having thus acknowledged, remembered, or recorded the Divine goodness, the Psalmist proceeds to place before us his apprehension and recognition of the Divine will; and on this subject his language deserves very particular attention: "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not; but a body hast thou prepared me: whole burnt-offering and sacrifice for sin thou didst not require. Then I said, Behold, I come! in the volume of the book it is written concerning me: I desired to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Psalm xl, 6-8. (See *Appendix*, note 17.)

In these remarkable words, David shows how fully he had obtained a spiritual understanding of the economy of grace. He had set "his hope on the Lord," (verse 4,) and realized the obedience of faith to an extent that gave him to see the true character of the several kinds of sacrifices appointed by the law. To his mind, in this state of spiritual enlightenment, these, instead of being the end and principal object of the law, were only means by which faithful worshipers might learn to

know, and acquire strength to lay hold on, the one sacrifice for sin, whose prepared body, vicariously offered, purchased a redemption for all. Thus he saw a higher and holier way of access unto God; the way of faith, which had given him a conscious experience of pardon, and enabled him to make a spiritual surrender of himself, to seek happiness alone in unreserved consecration to God.

These views, and this consecration, led to corresponding conduct, and identified the spiritual religion of David with the worship in his tabernacle, affording a fine illustration of the experimental part of preaching, to which reference has been made. He proceeds to say: "I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation." Psalm xl, 9, 10. Numerous other passages to the same purport might be cited. "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul." Psalm lxvi, 16. "My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him." Psalm xxii, 25.

Beside this preaching, another and very important part of this tabernacle worship consisted of what is called, in the passage before us, "to thank and praise the Lord God of Israel," and elsewhere "a service of song." 1 Chron. vi, 31. Prior to this period, some beautiful and expressive odes had been composed for the purpose of celebrating the Divine goodness, or of commemorating great deliverances wrought out by the mercy and power of the Lord; but this is the first time we have any information of singing being practiced as a part of public worship.

The extent to which this measure was carried, its purely religious and elevating character, and the effects it was calculated to produce, are subjects well deserving serious attention.

The extent to which this important measure was carried will be seen in the consideration of a few particulars. It was a daily service, (1 Chron. xvi, 37,) and would necessarily require a large number of hymns. Even supposing that the judgment of Bishop Patrick and others be correct, that the Psalm sung at the opening of this sanctuary was afterward sung at every service, (1 Chron. xvi, 8-36,) there would be required many more to furnish a suitable variety for a daily celebration of worship. We cannot, at this distance of time, pretend to say how extensive was the collection of sacred psalms that was provided for this service; but there are about sixty of those now standing in the sacred canon, which are addressed "to the chief musician," and are believed by Bishop Patrick and other scholars to have been prepared expressly for the services of this sanctuary. Of these, one is ascribed to Heman, six or seven to Asaph, and the remainder to David. It can scarcely be doubted that many others of the present book of Psalms, and very probably numbers not now in existence, were employed in the hymnology of this tabernacle.

For giving effect to this service of song, a large choir of singers was provided, and a number of well-qualified persons to play on various instruments of music. For it must be distinctly recognized, that music was not in this case an appendage to psalm-singing, but an essential, integral part of the service. An eminent living critic has said: "The Psalms are lyric in the proper sense; for among the Hebrews, as among the ancients generally, poetry, singing, and music were united; and the inscriptions to most of the Psalms determine their connection with music, though in a way not always intelligible to us." Indeed, the name "Psalms" was given to these sacred songs because the singing of them was usually accompanied by instrumental music.

We must not, however, by these circumstances be led to suppose that the character of this part of the service of the tabernacle was what would now be called *artistic*, ornamental,



and merely amusing. It was the very reverse of all this, purely religious, and highly elevating in its character. As the critic previously quoted observes: "Also as works of taste, these compositions deserve to be called *lyric*. The essence of lyric poetry is the immediate expression of feeling, and feeling is the sphere in which most of the Psalms move. Pain, grief, fear, hope, joy, trust, gratitude, submission to God, everything that moves and elevates the heart, is expressed in these songs."

Indeed, regarded as a separate means for affecting the heart in Divine worship, this "service of song" can scarcely be overestimated. Just observe what it presents to our view. Here is a mind naturally gifted, fired by a noble genius, yet the subject of true religion. This mind is excited by strong emotion, and becomes the subject of deep religious feeling. While in this state, it is led by the plenary inspiration of the Spirit of God to pour forth its sorrows, joys, aspirations, fears, or whatever else, in suitable and harmonious language. And this language, imbued with all the feeling, and charged permanently with all the pious emotion thus displayed, is placed as a grand magazine of means in the custody of the Church, to be brought out, day by day, in all the sweetness of its numbers, and freshness of its feeling, accompanied by all the magic power of musical sounds, to soften, cheer, elevate, inspire the souls of others in holy worship. Who does not see that in all this God has consecrated to his own use, and given to his devoted people, for their souls' good, a union of some of the most marvelous and most potent agencies by which the soul of man can be affected?

It is difficult to speak of the effects likely to result from this combination of agencies. If anything could fan a pure devotional feeling into a fire of Divine love and joy, this was likely to do it. What means could have been employed which would more certainly than these have fixed the great truths of God's covenant mercy in the minds and hearts of the people? Here promise and command, duty and privilege, were im-

pressed with the immediate presence and power of God, and brought to bear with hallowed effect on the best thoughts and feelings of pious Hebrews.

We regard this sanctuary, then, as first introducing two great evangelical agencies into the Hebrew Church—preaching and sacred song. The remembrance and publication of God's revealed truth and covenant mercy were here brought to bear on the experience of the people, who were then led to pour out their hearts before the Lord in the sweetest and most elevating strains of inspired poetry.

The results which followed the pious use of these means were of the most happy and important kind. Instruction and blessing were imparted to individuals. The case of Asaph, who was chief of the choir at this tabernacle, is an eminent proof of this. He speaks of the state of his mind under the pressure of violent temptation: "As for me, my feet were almost gone, my steps had well-nigh slipped." He had seen "the prosperity of the wicked," and could not comprehend the wisdom of such providential arrangements; his mind was accordingly greatly distressed and distracted, "until," as he says, "I went into the sanctuary of God." There his mind was enlightened, his understanding was informed; he saw the end of the wicked, how they are cast "down into destruction," and he exultingly turned to God, exclaiming, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." Psalm lxxiii. This sanctuary was the place where the best feelings of the pious Hebrews were called forth, and to which they, consequently, turned with the most intense desire and delight. "One thing," said David, "have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." Psalm xxvii, 4. The term "temple" here refers to this tabernacle, where "the beauty of the Lord," the glorious

shekinah, abode. The temple, properly so called, was not then built. Hence we find this man of God, when cut off from access to this sanctuary by political troubles, lamenting his deprivation in these terms: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" Psalm xlii, 1, 2.

Nor was this sanctuary limited in its communication of blessings to royalty, or to any select few of the community. Its worshipers, on the contrary, were very numerous. They are constantly spoken of as "the great congregation;" but, numerous as they were, it seems that the assembly was not an indiscriminate mass; there are repeated references to purity of character and holiness of life, as essential to this communion. Hence the royal Psalmist inquires: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is the generation of them that seek him." Psalm xxiv, 3-6. Again: "Lord, who shall stand in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoreth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved." Psalm xv.

But we have not only to regard this tabernacle as affording the Hebrews privileges of access to God unknown to the letter of their law, and bringing into operation spiritual agencies of great potency, which exercised a happy influence on the

minds and morals of great numbers of the people; we have also to regard this institution as a subject of sacred prophecy.

When the ark was removed from this tabernacle to the temple of Solomon, we are not told that the tabernacle itself was removed; nor is this likely. The tabernacle of Moses was taken down, and it, as well as its sacred furniture, carried to the temple; but no mention is made of removing the tabernacle from Mount Zion. As this place had now been frequented by the most pious of the Hebrews for more than thirty years, as their favorite place of worship, and as its sacred services in nowise interfered with those of the temple, it is more than probable that the young and pious king continued the services of this sanctuary as they had been begun by his father. And as this tabernacle, after the ark was removed from it, possessed no advantage which might not be obtained by the devout Hebrews in any part of the country, it seems likely that imitations of it would be made in different parts of the land, where the pious could meet together and worship the God of Israel: and thus light is cast on one of the very obscure subjects of Biblical history; namely, the origin of synagogues. It must be admitted that we have no positive proof of this, although there are passages which afford great countenance to such a supposition. We may instance the following: "The Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defense." Isaiah iv, 5. This text seems to show that, in the time of Isaiah, assemblies for religious worship were common in Judah; that these had some clear connection with the tabernacle on Mount Zion, so as to be called "dwelling-places of Mount Zion;" and, lastly, allusion is made to the shekinah of this sanctuary, and it is promised that a *glory* shall rest on all these, and that the glory shall be a defense.

But a dense cloud of error and wickedness soon gathered over the elected people of the Lord. They forsook the worship of the true God, and did evil in his sight: even the temple service was neglected, and idolatry fearfully prevailed. We need not wonder, then, that a sanctuary whose service could scarcely be maintained without genuine devotion should have been abandoned. This seems to have led to the delivery of the text. Amos was called to prophesy to the people of Jerusalem in the name of the Lord. In discharging the duties of this vocation, he had not only to arraign, expose, and condemn the sins of the people, and denounce against them the most terrible judgments, but to close this with a short, but brilliant and beautiful prophecy of the kingdom of Christ. It is generally believed that many, if not most, of the prophecies were delivered as discourses to the people, near the gate of the temple; and it must be acknowledged that this was a measure which brought the revelations of God's prescience before that section of the population which still professed allegiance to Jehovah. It is highly probable that Amos delivered his prophecies from this place, and, having finished his comminatory discourses, as he stood on Mount Moriah, his eye rested on Mount Zion, (which was separated from him by a very narrow valley,) where he saw the ruins of the tabernacle of David, which, abandoned and neglected amid the general decay of religious feeling, had fallen down; and that the Holy Spirit suggested a reference to this, as the basis of a glorious prediction of Gospel blessing. So he said, in the name of the Lord: "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things:" a prophecy which clearly places before us the genius and character, religious services and spirit, of the tabernacle of David, as similar and precursory to the kingdom of Christ.



Amos is not the only prophet who refers to the tabernacle of David, and makes it represent the kingdom and institutions of the Gospel. Isaiah (ix, 7) thus speaks, in one of his glorious prophecies, of the Messiah: "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order and to establish it with judgment and justice, from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Now if, while pondering over this prophecy, we desire more ample information as to the character of the kingdom thus prophetically set forth, and the means by which this dominion is to be established, the prophet supplies an answer to all our inquiries in another prophecy, (xvi, 5 :) "And in mercy shall the throne be established; and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness."

These prophecies considerably enlarge our field of vision with respect to the relation of the tabernacle of David to the kingdom of Christ. According to these, the shekinah, resting over the cherubim in the sanctuary of Mount Zion, typified the reign of Christ in the Gospel Church. In fact, this is the true line of descent, and the true exposition of the kingdom of Christ. Here, in those gracious institutions of a remembered and proclaimed covenant mercy, and thanksgivings of grateful love, Messiah sits ruling in the hearts of his people, dispensing truth, and hastening them on to the attainment of righteousness. It is not supposed that the Jewish people fully apprehended the spiritual character of these predictions, or formed accurate conceptions of the manner of their fulfillment. But it is important to a just apprehension of the subject under consideration, to bear in mind the evident fact, that they were familiar with this language, and fully assented to the general truth, that the appearance and kingdom of the Messiah had been predicted as the restoration of the tabernacle of David. This was inwrought into all their ideas of the future, was associated

with all their veneration for their sacred books, and made a prominent element of their national history and religion.

III. We have now finally to consider the application made of this subject by the united apostles and Christian believers at Jerusalem, and to collect the information afforded thereby respecting the character and constitution of the Christian Church.

If, after the above-quoted predictions of Isaiah and Amos, Holy Scripture had contained no further allusion to the tabernacle of David, its existence, character, privileges, and typical representation of the kingdom of Christ, would have been undoubted and important, and have afforded very interesting matter of inquiry for the religious antiquary and historian. This, however, is not the state of the case. To see this fully we must refer to a narrative of the meeting of apostles and Christian believers recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. (Chap. xv.) Messiah had appeared, completed the work of his mission, and ascended to glory; the Gospel had been preached, the Holy Ghost had been given, and Gentiles introduced into the Church of Christ, when a dispute of the most serious consequence arose as to the claims of the Mosaic ritual law on Christian believers.

The question arose out of the case of the Gentile converts. The apostles and the great majority of the believers in Judea had all been brought up in the observance of the Mosaic law; and as they became devoted to God through the Gospel of Christ, they became likewise more conscientiously and fully obedient to all the requirements of the law. This was not the case with the Gentile converts. Ignorant of the design of the Mosaic ritual, and of all its ceremonial duties, they regarded it as an unknown and intolerable yoke. Yet when these were converted to the faith of Christ, some of the Hebrew believers contended that they were bound to obey the whole law. Nor was this requirement put forth merely as something expedient; it was earnestly urged that it was needful to command them

to keep the law of Moses, saying, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." Acts xv, 1, 5.

The decision of a question of such vital importance to the rising Church, was formally referred "to the apostles and elders" at Jerusalem. Paul, Barnabas, and others went from Antioch to the Hebrew capital to take part in this important discussion. The meeting took place. Peter, Barnabas, and Paul recited the wonders wrought among the Gentiles by the preaching of the Gospel. But still there was wanting some clear, pointed, powerful, Scriptural authority to effect the permanent settlement of a question of such magnitude. And it was supplied by James, who quoted the words of the text, as incontrovertible evidence on the case. The question was, "Must the ritual law of Moses be obeyed by Christian converts?" To this the apostle replies, "Certainly not; for inspired prophecy declares that the kingdom of Christ is not to be a revival and extension of Mosaicism, but, on the contrary, a restoration of the tabernacle of David. And as in this sanctuary the Mosaic ritual had no place, so it can have no claims in the Christian Church." The most important feature of this case, however, is the perfect unanimity with which this judgment was received and adopted. This was a meeting composed almost entirely of Hebrews. All their sympathies and prejudices inclined them to the observance of the law. Yet no sooner is the citation of sacred prophecy made, than all perceive its force, all admit its decisive effect; even the great body of believers, to whom the decision is reported, unanimously concur; and in Jerusalem, within sight of the temple, where that ritual was still performed in all its extent and minuteness, the whole body of the Church repudiate its claims, and adopt the tabernacle of David as the Divinely appointed model for all Christian practice and institutions. To us this judgment, so unanimously adopted, presents the clearest demonstration of doctrine, the highest authority for action, that can possibly be conceived.

Let us then briefly see the effect of this decision, first with respect to those things which are thereby abolished, and then to those which are authoritatively established in the Christian Church.

The first element strenuously contended for by the Pharisees and other Judaizing teachers was circumcision. "Except ye be circumcised," said they, "ye cannot be saved." The effect of the decision was to sweep away forever this groundless assertion. Circumcision fell, and perished from the Christian Church, before the divinely inspired quotation of the prophecy of Amos by the apostle James. Let this never be forgotten; it deserves to be had in everlasting remembrance. It is the first great element in the *Magna Charta* of liberty, which the prediction respecting the tabernacle of David introduced into the Christian Church.

Sacrifice was abolished with circumcision. This rite made no part of the worship offered to God in the sanctuary on Mount Zion. The plea of popery, therefore, and of popish imitators everywhere, is here placed in direct collision with the clearest, highest, and most explicit apostolic authority. Christianity knows no sacrifice for sin but that of the Lamb of God who died on Calvary, and whose death it is a blasphemous parody to pretend to repeat.

With circumcision and sacrifice the priesthood was abolished. Indeed, an unsacrificing priesthood is a contradiction in terms. For every priest "is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices." Heb. viii, 3. But there was nothing of this kind in the tabernacle of David, whose sacred services, therefore, vividly represented the worship proper to that Church which is redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, whose one sacrifice for sin is universally and everlastingly prevalent, "once for all." Heb. x, 10.

Nor must it be forgotten that, with these elements of the Mosaic economy, every existing typical and symbolical thing was swept away. It is astonishing that educated Christian

men should evince so much weakness and ignorance as have been of late years displayed; not to use stronger terms. We have heard much of the symbolism of Churches, and men of learning have regarded it as matter quite open to their taste and judgment to uphold and teach a mystical and spiritual application of architectural and artistic arrangements. Such persons should be consistent, and include circumcision, sacrifice, and the priesthood in the list of their observances. All those are essential parts of the temple service; and those who contend for a Christianity established on that model should take it entire.

This is not the Christianity of the Bible. On the contrary, the whole college of apostles, and the entire body of believers at Jerusalem, point us to the sanctuary on Mount Zion, with its religious institutions, as our model for the Gospel Church; and there no ritual service was observed; there but one typical emblem, namely, the ark, was found; and this, we are distinctly assured, is supplied in the Christian Church by Jesus Christ spiritually sitting on his throne, dispensing mercy and truth, and promoting righteousness.

Is it not marvelous that in the nineteenth century after Christ it should be necessary to recur to first principles, and to combat fatal, soul-destroying, and inveterate error? Reading the Gospel history, we are not unfrequently led to wonder why the temple and its services were so long permitted to remain after the day of Pentecost. While the infant Church of Christ was driven to worship in solitude, or to dare fiery persecution by an avowal of their faith and hope, the temple service went on day after day for forty years! Sacrifices rendered useless and obsolete by the offering up of the Lord Jesus "once for all," were allowed to be offered with constant repetition, to the great trial of Hebrew believers, and the gratification and encouragement of the persecutors of the Christian cause. Why was this state of things permitted? We will not pretend to give a dogmatic reply to the question we have



raised; but will say that one great result of this continuance of the temple service was, that it enabled the primitive Church to rear up a more decided and prominent protest against the incorporation or imitation of it in the Christian Church than would otherwise have been possible. With all this system of priesthood in living action and gorgeous splendor before their eyes, the primitive Christians repudiated it entirely, leaving it to their degenerate successors after the days of Constantine, to invest the Christian ministry with a mongrel compound of heathenish pomp and Hebrew exclusiveness and attributes.

Yet, however gorgeous and fascinating this compound may appear, one thing is perfectly certain, it is not apostolical Christianity. We have the type of this, not in the temple, but in the tabernacle of Zion. How majestic in simplicity, how beautiful in truth and holiness, how glorious in effective religious action, is the Christianity thus presented to our view! Here the yoke which crushed the neck of the Hebrew is removed, and man is mercifully brought into spiritual union with God.

When shall we fully realize all these privileges, which are the undoubted birthright of every Christian? Not when we become more able disputants, or more zealous sectaries. No, but when we enter more fully into the apostolic spirit, make the word of God our continual rule, and experience each in his own heart the reign of God's Messiah, ruling in truth, and promoting righteousness.

If, then, these remains of the old economy are abolished, what institutions and usages are established?

In the first place it is observable, that, although by these means all pretense to a Christian priesthood is most completely destroyed, a separated and entirely devoted ministry is clearly established. Although there were no priests engaged in conducting the religious worship of David's tabernacle, after the opening service, (1 Chron. xvi, 1, 2,) there were Levites duly appointed to minister. These were not burdened with the

cares or labors of secular business; their temporal wants were supplied, for the express purpose of enabling them to give their undivided attention to the service of the sanctuary. It is scarcely possible to set forth the character and position of the Christian ministry more clearly than it is done by the institutions of the sanctuary on Mount Zion. The Christian minister is not a priest; he has no sacrifice to offer, he has no exclusive or pre-eminent way of access unto God. Is he, then, nothing but what every Christian may be? So some have thought, and earnestly and loudly said. But this is a fatal error also. The Christian ministry is an ordinance of God, a direct and special appointment of Christ. The Christian minister should be loved, honored, and esteemed for his work's sake. His temporal wants should be fully met, so that he may have no need to entangle himself with the affairs of this life. And, what is more than all, the organization of the Church should be so arranged, that the minister may have every facility for discharging, in the most efficient manner, his spiritual functions in the sanctuary, and for shepherding the souls intrusted to his charge.

It is indeed difficult to over-estimate the vast importance, the real elevation of the Christian ministry. And of this we have a striking figure in the Levites of David's tabernacle, conducting its spiritual services, and leading the people to a full acquaintance with true religion, to a rich experience of God's covenant mercy.

It must, however, be further observed, that although an appointed ministry was charged with the provision of every requisite for the maintenance of Divine worship, that ministry was not to be exclusive. Other holy men, not of the ministerial line, unconnected with its appointment, and actually engaged in the secular labors of life, also officiated in this sanctuary, and preached to the great congregation. It is thus in the kingdom of Christ: for he who sends by whom he will send, frequently calls men to various spheres of usefulness,

and even to preach the Gospel, although not separated to the ministry.

It is not, however, more to the external and visible institutions of the Church that this model applies, than to its genius and spirit. The tabernacle of David evidently arose from the existence and felt wants of a religious spirit. Men needed means of more direct and effective union with God, and communion with his Spirit, than was afforded by priestly instrumentality in the national sanctuary. And it pleased the Lord to sanction and to honor such a deviation from his own appointed ordinance as would supply this need. Hence the ark of God and his glory dwelt in the sanctuary of Zion. There the people met before the Lord; there they heard the wonders of his covenant mercy, and felt the power of his saving grace. There they told what God had done for their souls, and learned more fully to love and serve him.

And this is what the Christian Church is meant to effect: not to provide a place for a formal or a fashionable assembly; much less for ritual display or ceremonial observances; but as a means for leading the hearts of the people into direct intercourse with God, for subjecting their minds to the living influence of the Spirit of Christ, and, through union with him, for establishing a happy and holy communion of redeemed souls: in short, to afford a means for worshiping God in the beauty of holiness, in spirit and in truth.

How marvelous are the merciful manifestations of God! Who could suppose that a system so full of type and figure as the Mosaic could, in one great feature of its operation, have been suspended for so many years, in order to impart the most substantial means of religious improvement and elevation to the people? and, what is still more wonderful, that this measure should not only have been the means of imparting immediate blessing, but have been wrought up into sacred prophecy, and used under apostolic inspiration, so as to cast throughout all ages

a steady light on the true character of the Gospel Church, and to show forth the nature of Gospel institutions? Yet so it is. So fully, indeed, is this the case, that none can adequately apprehend the glorious development of grace which issued in the revelation of the Gospel, without a recognition of the tabernacle of David, and some tolerable acquaintance with its services and position in sacred prophecy.

It may serve to fix this matter in our mind, and to correct some mistaken notions, if we direct our attention in conclusion to the important fact, that throughout the whole of those parts of the Bible which were written after the establishment of the tabernacle on Mount Zion, this name "Sion" or "Zion" became, and to the end of the sacred canon continued to be, the embodiment of the religious interests of the Hebrews, the ideal representation of the cause of Divine truth in the world.

While David and his pious associates worshiped in his tabernacle before the ark of the covenant, we need not wonder that he should speak exultingly of the privileges which they thus enjoyed, and "sing praises to the Lord who dwelleth in Zion, and declare among the people his doings." Psalm ix, 1. And we find this exultation freely indulged, and expressed in the strongest terms. Hence we read, "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her, and the Highest himself shall establish her." Psalm lxxxvii, 2, 5. "Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion, and to thee shall the vow be performed." Psalm lxxv, 1. "They go from strength to strength; every one of them in Zion appeareth before God." Psalm lxxxiv, 7. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great king. God is known in her palaces for a refuge." Psalm xlviii, 1-3. These and many other passages which might be cited, show

the intense exultation which the worshipers on Mount Zion felt in their religious privileges, and especially in their nearness to God, and confidence in his protection and blessing. And all this might have been expected. A most extraordinary exception had been made in their favor; the rites and rules of their dispensation had been virtually suspended, as respected worship, that they might realize immediate access unto God, without any medium or instrumentality; they had high and holy spiritual enjoyment; and it is but natural to conclude that they would appreciate and rejoice in these advantages. These portions of Scripture, therefore, and many others of similar import, express just exactly what might have been expected from such a people, and in such circumstances.

Texts of this class, however, do not contain all the allusions which are found in the prophetic parts of the Old Testament, and in the New Testament Scriptures, to the holy privileges of this sacred hill. When, with special reference to the cause of religion, we find the captivity of the Hebrews lamented, *Zion* is the term chosen to designate the nation and the people. "By the rivers of Babylon there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion." Psalm cxxxvii, 1-3. "Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O Lord." Psalm xcvi, 8. "He hath violently taken away his tabernacle, as if it were of a garden: He hath destroyed his places of the assembly; the Lord hath caused the solemn feasts and Sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion, and hath despised in the indignation of his anger the king and the priest." Lam. ii, 6. "The Lord hath accomplished his fury; he hath poured out his fierce anger, and hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof." Lam. iv, 11.

So when we hear of the restoration of the Hebrews from



this state of captivity and ruin, it is Zion that is spoken of as the representative of the national and religious interests of this people. "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea, the set time is come. When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory." Psalm cii, 13, 16. "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream." Psalm cxxvi, 1. "For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah, that they may dwell there, and have it in possession." Psalm lxix, 35. "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness." Isa. i, 27.

When, also, the Lord is praised and extolled, this is the term most frequently used, as if to celebrate with special regard the blessings given by God in the sanctuary of Zion: "For the Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation." Psalm cxxxii, 13. "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion." Psalm cxlvii, 12. "Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King." Psalm xlix, 2. "Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." Isa. xii, 6. "Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God." Joel ii, 23.

It is, however, more remarkable, as an illustration of our text, and a strong confirmation of the exposition we have given of it, that the most distinguished promises and prophecies of the coming of Christ, and of the glory of his kingdom, are given in reference to Zion. "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Psalm ii, 6, 7. "When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory." Psalm cii, 16. "He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Micah iv, 2. "Thus saith the Lord: I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain

of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain." Zech. viii, 3. "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation." Isa. xxviii, 16.

In a similar strain the Hebrews were urged to the performance of duty, the attainment of privilege, and the promotion of the work and will of the Lord. "Arise, and let us go up to Zion, unto the Lord our God." Jer. xxxi, 6. "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion." Isa. lii, 1. "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." Isa. lxii, 1. "They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten." Jer. l, 5. "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain, let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh." Joel ii, 6. "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain: O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God." Isa. xl, 9.

We might proceed with such quotations almost to an unlimited extent: these and a multitude of similar passages prove beyond the possibility of a doubt, that Zion, or Sion, is placed before us in the Scriptures as the ideal representative of Scriptural and spiritual religion: this is an unquestionable fact. But some persons will tell us, that by Mount Zion in those texts we are to understand the temple, as the seat and center of Old Testament religion. Where is the proof of this? It has often been thoughtlessly or recklessly said; but is there one single text in the whole Bible in which the term "Zion" is certainly applied to the temple or to its locality? We have carefully searched, but cannot find such a passage; why, then, should this meaning of the term be supposed? The temple was not built on Mount Zion, but on Mount Moriah. No reason has

been assigned why the temple should be designated by a term which, in truth, belonged to the opposite hill, on which the house and tabernacle of David stood. But the ascription of the term "Zion" to any other than the site of the tabernacle of David, is not only unsupported by any Scriptural authority; it is in direct opposition to it. When St. Paul wrote, "Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempests," etc.; . . . "but ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem;" he evidently placed in contrast the privileges of the law with those of the Gospel. Mount Sinai, therefore, as the locality whence God gave forth the Mosaic economy, which was perpetuated in the temple service, represented that dispensation; and Mount Zion, the place where a simple and spiritual worship was established, as typical and precursory of the blessings of the Gospel, set forth the last dispensation of God's mercy to mankind.

It is manifest, therefore, that the term used here to represent the Gospel, and so generally employed throughout the Scriptures to set forth the cause and interests of spiritual religion, originated in the character of the worship which was performed in the tabernacle of David; that, in fact, this worship exhibited a measure of Gospel privilege even under the operation of the law; and it is to this pre-Christian Gospel privilege that the term is constantly applied in the Psalms, and in the prophetic writings; and hence the immediate and unanimous decision of the Church when this text was quoted by St. James.

How beautiful is the harmony with which these views place before us the merciful revelation of Divine grace to mankind! The law was introduced as a mighty persuasive and protest against idolatry, and for the purpose of setting forth, by the most significant and vivid typical action, the redeeming work of the Lord Jesus. This being done, the tabernacle of David

is raised, and Mount Zion becomes the seat of a manifestation of spiritual privilege and saving grace, which, in a great measure, anticipated Gospel blessing, and was exactly adapted to prepare the world, and especially the Hebrew Church, for the coming and kingdom of God's Messiah

## DISCOURSE V.

CHRIST ON THE PROPITIATORY BETWEEN THE LIVING  
CHERUBIM.

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this has touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.—ISAIAH vi, 1-7,

WE have hitherto had to consider the cherubim as inanimate symbols accompanying the ark of the covenant, where the presence of God was revealed in the Hebrew sanctuary, or as associated with a similar manifestation of the Divine presence in Eden. In these positions, they appear before us as typical of great spiritual realities.

Here, however, the scene is changed. In this vision the cherubic forms are no longer metallic figures attached to the golden propitiatory, but creature-like forms, full of life, attending on the King who sits on the throne. This new and singular development of the typical things of the Hebrew sanctuary deserves our most serious and attentive consideration. We will, then, consider:

I. The peculiar revelations made in this vision, with their bearing and influence on the mind of the prophet, and on the circumstances and destiny of the Hebrew people.



II. The information afforded by this vision, when compared with other portions of Scripture, respecting the typical import of the sacred things of the most holy place.

III. The revelation of evangelical truth and agency which is thus given to the world, and their contingent happy and fearful results.

I. In considering the peculiar manifestations afforded us in this Scripture, we must first observe that, according to the common consent of all critics, and, indeed, the plain and obvious construction of the language, the scene of this vision is in the temple of the Lord. The prophet is supposed to be standing by the entrance to the holy place, or outer sanctuary; but the vail is removed, and the ark of the covenant raised on high. On this elevated seat, as on a throne, the prophet says he "saw Jehovah." It does not seem that he meant to declare that he had seen any personal manifestation of the presence of the Lord; but rather a very splendid and abundant revelation of the shekinah glory, which formerly occupied the Mosaic sanctuary, sitting between the cherubim; and which, on the dedication of the temple in the days of Solomon, took possession of that building by filling it with a glory so extensive and intense, that "the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God." 1 Chron. v, 14. This is the view which the ancient Hebrews took of this part of the passage; for they render the words, "the glory of the Lord;" and this may be relied on as true, for it has received the seal of Divine inspiration. The apostle John, alluding to this vision, says, "These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him." John xii, 41. This is a decisive proof that it was the *glory* that was seen by the prophet.

But the language of the apostle supplies us with further information of a very important character. He tell us not only that it was the glory that was seen in this wonderful vision, but that it was the glory of Christ. The great truth,

indicated by numerous texts in the Old Testament Scriptures, is here fully asserted; namely, that the shekinah glory of the tabernacle and temple was a manifestation of Christ. It was, therefore, a revelation of the second person of the glorious Trinity—the Word of the Lord who appeared to our first parents in Eden, and afterward took up his residence in the temple—who was manifested in this glorious manner to the prophet.

But the revelation of this effulgent glory of the Lord is not the only peculiarity of the vision. Christ was thus gloriously revealed, but it was not merely on the propitiatory surrounded by the cherubim of glory, but surrounded by living cherubim. These are seen beside his throne, covering their faces and their feet with wings, and flying from one place to another. More than this, they are vocal, and with unceasing earnestness hymn forth the holiness of God. They cried one to another, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts.” This is altogether a new development of great interest in the process of revelation. Further, this proclamation of the Divine holiness is accompanied by the assertion of the universality of his glory. On one remarkable occasion, long before this time, when, through the sin and rebellion of Israel, it seemed as if the Divine purpose in their election would utterly fail, we have a prophetic assertion, proceeding from the Divine glory, similar to that before us. When the report of the faithless spies induced the whole host of Israel to rebel against the Lord, and propose electing for themselves another captain instead of Moses, that they might return to Egypt; after they had been turned from their purpose by the interposition of God, and their sin had been pardoned at the intercession of Moses, the Lord declared, “But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.” Num. xiv, 21. What was then predicted is now spoken of as accomplished: “The whole earth is full of his glory.” The import of this remarkable declaration we shall have carefully to consider.

We have next in order to observe the effect produced by this proclamation of the Divine holiness and glory: "The posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke." There is intense grandeur in the imagery here; but we must not be diverted from the sense of the words, and the effects they produced, by the splendor with which their delivery is invested.

In order to appreciate the meaning and application of this sublime subject, we must see the condition of the Old Testament Church at this period. No reasonable doubt can be entertained that the religious state of the Hebrews fearfully deteriorated after the death of David. Isaiah, in the first chapter of his book, has given us such ample information on this subject, that we need not go further in search of any other proof of our point. As if overwhelmed with a deep sense of the wickedness of his country, the inspired seer exclaims: "Hear, O heavens! and give ear, O earth! for the Lord hath spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me!" We are then told that this rebellion and alienation from God had introduced fatal disorder into the whole of the moral and religious condition of the people. This is asserted in the strongest terms: "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores." The precise character of this iniquity is afterward pointed out. It did not consist in an entire abandonment of Divine worship, nor in an avowed rejection of the law. For the religious assemblies were still attended; the Sabbaths were observed; the new moons and the appointed feasts were continued. What, then, was the nature of this great defection? It was clearly moral impurity, notorious wickedness, the unlimited practice of evil; associated at the same time with a profession of religion, and an attendance on its worship. And hence the Lord says by the prophet: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices

unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. . . . Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear." These, be it remembered, were all divinely appointed ordinances; yet now we are told, in every form of speech, that they not only were not agreeable, but were displeasing, offensive, nauseating to God. And the reason of this strange language is set before us, in the violence and wickedness of the people: "Your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well." Isa. i, 11-17.

Such was the character of the people of Israel at this period. The economy of grace with which they had been favored had failed to work in them the result which it was intended to produce—"holiness unto the Lord." If they had abandoned the prescribed worship altogether, the case had been different; for then their wickedness would not have stood so intimately connected with the worship of God. But as such extreme profligacy and impurity were associated with the house of God and the ordinances which he had appointed, the latter became to some extent responsible for, and disgraced by, the former. At this time the case had become so desperate, that a remarkable interposition was rendered necessary to vindicate the purity of the Divine law, to show forth the holiness of the Divine character, to manifest more clearly the great evil of sin, and the necessity for its being put away and pardoned.

Such an interposition we have detailed in the words before us. The most sacred and essential of the things pertaining to

the ritual law—the ark, the mercy-seat, the cherubim, and the glorious shekinah—are all unveiled and exhibited to the prophet; the propitiatory is raised on high, the cherubim appear full of life, and the glory of God flames forth with surpassing brightness, so that the temple is filled. But all this is done, not for the purpose of exalting the ritual law, but to vindicate the Divine character. The living cherubim, in unceasing aspirations, proclaim the Divine holiness and the universality of the Divine glory.

It must be evident to all, that this glorious manifestation fully met the wants of the case we have described. It showed forth the grand fact, that the very nature of God, as well as his law, was in direct antagonism to sin; that any professed service of God, accompanied by sinful practices in the worshiper, was a direct insult to his Divine purity; that so far from the worship palliating, excusing, or covering the sin, it added to its enormity, placed the individual under a weightier load of guilt, and exposed him to a more terrible punishment. The proclamation of the Divine holiness clearly proved all this, and the declaration of the universal prevalence of the Divine glory showed that sin could not be concealed. It seems as if the Hebrews of this day, buried in sensuality and vice, imagined that the glory which they looked to as their national palladium, their continual defense, shut up in the sacred sanctuary, saw not, heard not the fearful violations of God's truth and law which everywhere prevailed. These words, proceeding from the cherubim, declared that the all-seeing eye of the GLORIOUS ONE witnessed all the surrounding iniquity; that it was committed in his presence, in direct affront to his majesty, in constant insult to his purity; that he saw the wickedness of heart which characterized the worshipers, saw the blood of violence on their hands, and loathed, frowned upon, and condemned such profound hypocrisy.

That this was the object of the vision, we may be assured by the effect produced on the mind of the prophet. "Woe is me!"



he exclaimed; "for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Isaiah felt that, in contact with the perfect purity of God, he was not pure; he felt that, living in the midst of such uncleanness, he was not clean; and his mind consequently sank under a deep sense of his distress. But the vision showed that it was not the existence of sin itself that presented any difficulty to the will of God; that if sin was acknowledged, confessed, lamented, as in the case of the prophet, there was every appliance necessary for an instant cure. Immediately, therefore, as the prophet deplored his sin, and feared its consequences, one of the living cherubim applied a live coal from the altar to his lips, and declared that the atoning efficacy had prevailed; that his "iniquity was taken away," and his "sin purged;" and the prophet was instantly restored to confidence and peace.

The vision now presents a new phase, and suggests further inquiry. A voice from the Divine glory inquires, "Whom shall I send? and who will go for us?" We have here an intimation of further Divine interposition. The Lord had seen the carnal service and sinful conduct of the people, and had come out of his place to make known the holiness of his character, and his hatred of sin. But he is not satisfied with this proclamation. He purposes sending a messenger to this depraved and infatuated people, to show forth their iniquity, and the means by which they might be saved. In doing this, he asks two questions, which define the two cardinal features of every call to work for God. "Whom shall I send?" Every person properly engaged in this work must be sent, must be commissioned by God to the special course of duty in which he is to be useful. And the question, "Who will go for us?" calls forth the other essential requisite—a willing consecration to the Divine service. The prophet felt the claims of God to rest on his conscience, and felt his own mind subjected to the

Divine will, and accordingly responded: "Here am I; send me."

The prophet's surrender of himself to God was accepted, and the message of God to the Hebrew people was immediately given: "And he said, Go, and tell this people—

"Go on hearing, but understand not;  
Go on seeing, but perceive not.  
Make the heart of this people fat;  
Make heavy their ears, and close up their eyes;  
Lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears,  
And perceive with their heart, and turn, and be healed."

DR. HENDERSON'S TRANSLATION.

It is of great importance that we form an accurate estimate of the sense of this passage. The first impression conveyed to the mind by reading our English version is, that the words contain a judicial sentence of the people to final obduracy and ruin. Our ablest commentators, however, from a careful inspection of the original text, assure us that this impression is incorrect; that "the passage, in effect, contains nothing more than a prediction of the obduracy of the Jews, and the consequences by which it would be followed: only it is expressed in a form which indicates strong feeling on the part of the speaker, and a persuasion that such would infallibly be their condition."—*Dr. Henderson, sub loco.*

Without the abandonment of sin on their part, no proclamation of truth could enlighten and save them. The Lord foresaw that they would not abandon their sins; and therefore, as another eminent commentator observes, "in that case it is clear that the mode specified is not a *direct* agency on the part of God in blinding the mind, (which we cannot reconcile with any just notions of the Divine character,) but in suffering the truth to produce a regular effect on sinful minds."—*Barnes on John xii, 40.*

Considering the height of religious privilege to which the Hebrews had been raised, the case before us is full of awful

import. They had been called and cared for by God. He had chosen them as the objects of his peculiar love, had come down and dwelt among them. Jehovah had attested his compassion toward Israel by a thousand miracles, and by ages of gracious interposition. Yet now, while professing to serve him, and to continue the observance of the religious ordinances which the Lord had given them, they are so universally and so fully devoted to sin, that he sees them past hope, knows that even the most merciful proclamation of his truth and grace will, by being neglected and disobeyed, only tend to darken their understanding, and to harden their hearts. The message before us can, therefore, only be regarded as a predictive prelude to the final ruin of the Jewish nation.

We have now, therefore, to consider,

II. The information afforded by this vision, when compared with other portions of Scripture, respecting the typical import of the sacred things of the most holy place.

In a preceding discourse we requested that it might be taken for granted that the cherubim, and seraphim, and living creatures, mentioned by several of the sacred writers, should be regarded as identical in design and typical import. It is now intended to prove what was then assumed. In doing this, we will first call attention to some points of similarity and connection which subsist between the seraphim of this prophetic vision, and the cherubim of Ezekiel. The prophet of Chebar, describing his vision in the first chapter of his prophecy, says: "I looked, and behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire. Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings. And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled like the

color of burnished brass. And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides ; and they four had their faces and their wings." Ezek. i, 4-8.

It may seem difficult to establish any definite similarity between the brief description given of the seraphim by Isaiah, and this more elaborate account of the living creatures by Ezekiel. Yet, on examination, there are found such points of coincidence as seem to point out an undoubted identity in the things represented by the two prophets. First, let attention be given to the name employed by Isaiah. He calls them *seraphim*. Now it may, perhaps, startle the English reader to be told, that this sacred seer uses the Hebrew word which is here brought untranslated into our Bible, four times in the course of his prophecies, twice here, (Isa. vi, 2, 6,) and in two other places, (xiv, 29 ; xxx, 6 ;) and that in each of the two latter cases, the term is rendered "*fiery serpent*." In order to solve this difficulty, it will be necessary to direct attention to a note appended to a preceding discourse. (See *Appendix*, note 11.) It was there shown, that this term was applied to the brazen serpent of Moses, because it aptly represented the bright and burnished appearance of the fiery serpents which then destroyed the people. The word itself, as a verb, signifies "to burn;" and as such it is constantly used in the Old Testament Scriptures. And because highly burnished copper or brass, or these metals exposed to a glowing heat, resembled the fiery appearance of a very venomous kind of serpent, it was applied to them in the narrative of Moses, and is twice used in the former sense by Isaiah. But then it is asked, "How is the term so applied to the living cherubim by this prophet?" Clearly because these golden figures, exposed to the intense radiance of the Divine glory, exhibited a bright burning appearance. As Parkhurst well observes, "they were thus named, no doubt, from their burning brightness or radiancy."

If, then, we apply this exposition of the appearance of the

seraphim to the narrative of Ezekiel's vision, the living creatures described by him, we are told, came "out of the midst" of the fire; "a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as of the color of amber.... And they sparkled like the color of burnished brass." Ezek. i, 4, 7. We have here, therefore, one point of coincidence clearly established. The appearance which Ezekiel described in a verbal account, Isaiah set forth by a single word, used as a significant name, and bringing before us the appearance of "the bright or burning ones."

Then, brief as Isaiah's description is, it approximates sufficiently to the account of Ezekiel's living creatures, to remove all doubt as to their referring to the same objects. The seraphim had six wings, but the living creatures are said to have four only. But then it is added by the latter prophet, that every one not only had four wings, but also "the likeness of the hands of a man under his wings." Ezek. x, 21. Dr. A. Clarke observes on this clause: "I doubt much whether the arms be not here represented as all covered with feathers, so that they had the appearance of wings, only the hands were bare. This would give to each living creature the appearance of six wings." This is highly probable, especially as Isaiah says nothing in his description of the seraphim having hands, although, when a certain action was required to be performed, it is seen that they had hands to use.

Then, further, no reasonable doubt can be entertained, that both these prophets were describing the cherubim of the sanctuary in an animated state. That this was the case with Isaiah, is clear from the sense of the vision and all its circumstances. "The scenery of the vision is taken from the temple. God is represented on his throne, above the ark, in the most holy place, where the glory appeared above the cherubim."—*Hewlett's Commentary, sub loco*. The animated cherubs proclaim his holiness and glory; and, speaking of these, the prophet calls them *the bright or burning ones*. It is equally



clear, that Ezekiel speaks of the same symbolic figures, whom he calls "living creatures." Ezekiel was a priest; he must therefore have been perfectly acquainted with the cherubic form; yet, having given an ample description of his first and second visions, he says: "This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel by the river of Chebar; and I knew that they were the cherubim." Ezek. x, 20. When we come to consider all the particulars of Ezekiel's vision, this conclusion will be further established and confirmed; although it seems that the evidence before us is quite sufficient to identify the seraphim of Isaiah and the living creatures of Ezekiel with each other, and both with the cherubim of the sanctuary.

Ezekiel has also enabled us to extend this connection to the cherubim of Paradise, and thus to identify cherubic appearances from the beginning with the representations of the prophets. Speaking in the loftiest tone of prophetic irony of the King of Tyre, he says: "Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire." Ezek. xxviii, 13-16.

What is the import of this extraordinary passage? That it sets forth the glory of the King of Tyre, preparatory to a prophecy of his fearful and total ruin, very much in the style of Isaiah's prediction of the destruction of the King of Babylon,

(chapter xiv,) is seen and admitted by all. Yet, as far as I have had the means of inquiring, no commentator has given any clear or consistent sense to this magnificent prophecy. The cause of this is worthy of our inquiry. It is certain that the prophet here sets the King of Tyre before us under the image or figure of something very great and glorious in appearance and privilege, or under a series of such figures. All our commentators, I believe, suppose the prophet to have adopted the latter of these courses; and regard his language as setting forth a series of brilliant poetic figures, expressive of great dignity and glory.

Thus the words, "Thou hast been in Eden," have been supposed, by Bishop Lowth and others, to refer to the glory of Adam in his primeval state. The clause, "Every precious stone was thy covering," has been taken to represent the glory of the Tyrian crown, with some allusion to the jewels on the breast-plate of the Hebrew high priest. Again, the terms, "the anointed cherub that covereth," is applied to the cherubim of the sanctuary; while, strange to say, the significant words, "Thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire," are supposed to mean, "Thou hast, as it were, been placed among the twelve precious stones on the breast-plate of the high priest." So that, by a very forced and far-fetched sense, the King of Tyre is, within the compass of two verses, supposed to be compared to Adam, to one of the cherubim of the sanctuary, and to a gem on the high priest's breast-plate; the commentator all along overlooking the important fact, that this prediction, being directed against a Gentile king, was not likely to be based on a reference to the most sacred and mysterious elements of the Hebrew faith and worship. The notion that various objects are referred to in this prophecy seems to be the cause of all this confusion, and, in fact, of the utter failure of every attempt to give the language before us a consistent sense.

In endeavoring, then, to supply this *desideratum*, it seems

our obvious duty, in the first place, to see whether all the various inflections of the prophet's language may not refer to one object. In making this inquiry, it is necessary to recall attention to the fact, that sculptured representations of the cherubic figures are found among the remains of all ancient nations, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Egypt. We have not such ample information, yet respecting the other countries; but in Egypt it is known that sacred shrines were made and adorned with cherubic figures, which were regarded as objects of great sanctity and glory. We also know that the cherubim of the sanctuary were made of pure gold, and stood on the mercy-seat, or throne of grace, in the immediate presence of God. With these facts before us, it cannot be deemed unreasonable to conclude, that such sacred emblematic images were well known in the time of this prophet; that they were made of gold, and sometimes gorgeously adorned with precious stones. This supposition is warranted by so many analogies, and is supported by so much probability, that it may be regarded almost as an historical fact.

And it seems that nothing more than this is required to afford a basis for a clear and consistent interpretation of the passage now under consideration. Let this be granted, and the following facts remembered; namely, that the cherubim were placed in Eden immediately after the fall; that the cherubim were divinely appointed to overshadow the mercy-seat of the sanctuary with their wings, which form, indeed, we may conclude, from the evidence of the Egyptian sculptures, was the primitive one; and that, from the beginning in Eden to the days of Ezekiel, they were placed in connection with the fire of wrath, or, as it is rendered in our version of this prophet, "a fire infolding itself." Ezek. i, 4. Between them, also, there were coals of fire; for in the vision of Ezekiel (x, 2) the Divine person in human form on the throne said to the man clothed with linen: "Go in between the wheels, even under the cherub, and fill thine hands with coals of fire from between the cherubim."

With these facts before us, when we read the address of Ezekiel to the King of Tyre, saying: "Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so; thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire;" does it not instantly occur to the mind, that the plain and obvious sense of the words refers to the cherubic figures? These were in Eden; they were afterward formed of gold adorned with precious stones; they were anointed to spread forth their wings over the propitiatory; they were always associated with the fires of wrath and of sacrifice. No allusion in the whole of the Bible seems more natural than this, when the whole case is fairly considered.

Nor must it be forgotten that this sense is in entire accordance with the object of the prophet, and the scope of his communication. It was certainly the design of Ezekiel to show the glorious condition to which the providence of God had raised the King of Tyre, and the certainty of his punishment and ruin in consequence of sin. Now the view given above fully meets this. The cherubim were of special Divine appointment in Eden, and afterward in the sanctuary. They were in "the mountain of God;" a phrase clearly equivalent to "the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north," of Isaiah's prophecy, (xiv, 13,) before referred to, and which undoubtedly relates to the garden of Eden. They were golden and glorious to a proverb—"the cherubim of glory;" they were raised to immediate contact with God, and made partakers of his effulgent radiance. What figure could more strikingly set forth elevated providential appointment, glorious regal dignity, and exalted privilege, than this? Or what language could more appositely refer to the great elements involved in the allusion, than does this of the prophet? There does not appear to be any doubt but that the prophet, in this passage, apostrophizes the King of Tyre under the figure of a

golden and highly ornamented cherub raised to surpassing dignity and glory.

This being the case, let us look at this passage as imparting some information respecting the cherubim. In the first instance, it shows that the prevalence of the fire of wrath, or the infolding fire, although not seen in the Hebrew sanctuary, being supplied in that case by the fire on the altar of sacrifice, was nevertheless a clearly recognized and usual accompaniment of the cherubic figures. Secondly, we see that the passage clearly associates and identifies all the cherubic figures from the beginning. They are thereby recognized as prominent elements of the system of grace throughout the patriarchal and Levitical dispensations, having the same character, object, and end. And, lastly, this case proves the intense abhorrence with which the Lord regards sin; inasmuch as, if it is found indulged and encouraged even in a cherub, gloriously irradiated with the Divine presence, it "will be cast out as profane from the mountain of God." Ezek. xxviii, 16.

Having thus shown the identity of all the Old Testament cherubim, we now direct attention to the New Testament. In these Scriptures we should scarcely expect to find much in the way of description of the cherubic form, or use of their typical action, inasmuch as the sacred writings of the New Covenant treat rather of the spiritual things signified and previously shadowed forth by the types of the preceding dispensations, than of a continuance of their typical character. A brief examination, however, will not only place before us such descriptive statements of the cherubic form as will fully establish the identity of the cherubim of the two covenants, but, in addition to this, we shall find such information as will confirm the views already expressed as to the true import of their symbolical nature. We direct attention to the following passage in the Apocalypse: "Behold, a throne was set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like



■ jasper and a sardine stone; and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four-and-twenty seats, and upon the seats I saw four-and-twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings, and voices; and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne there was ■ sea of glass like unto crystal; and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. The first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had the face of a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." Rev. iv, 2-8.

We request a careful comparison of the description of these "beasts," or "living creatures," (for undoubtedly the latter is the proper translation of the word *ζῶον*) here used by the apostle,) with those given by Isaiah of the seraphim, and Ezekiel of the living cherubim. Let us direct attention to several points of similarity.

1. John says, (Rev. iv, 6,) they were "in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne;" Isaiah, (vi, 1, 2,) that he saw "the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up," . . . and that "above it [or beside it] stood the seraphim. Ezekiel states, (i, 26,) that "above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne." So that in each case the cherubim stand connected with the throne of God, their positions varying according to the scope of the vision. This will be found the case in other respects.

2. John says they were four, (Rev. iv, 6;) Ezekiel gives the number as four, (Ezek. i, 5;) Isaiah gives the plural, without stating the number.

3. John says, they were "full of eyes before and behind." Rev. iv, 6, 8. Ezekiel also says, "Their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings . . . were full of eyes." Ezek. x, 12. In the brief description of Isaiah there is no mention of this.

4. John says, they had six wings, (Rev. iv, 8;) Isaiah also says they had six wings; Ezekiel, that they had four wings, "and the likeness of the hands of a man under their wings," Ezek. x, 21; which completes the similarity in this particular.

5. John says, they resembled a lion, a calf, a man, and an eagle. (Rev. iv, 7.) Ezekiel observes: "As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man and the face of a lion on the right side; and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle." Ezek. i, 10. Isaiah does not mention this feature.

6. John says: "Before the throne a sea of glass like unto crystal," Rev. iv, 6; Ezekiel, "The likeness of the firmament on the heads of the living creatures was as the color of the terrible crystal." Ezek. 1, 22.

7. John states: "I beheld, and lo! in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain." Rev. v, 6. Ezekiel says: "And upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it." "And the glory of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim." Ezek. i, 26; x, 18. And Isaiah saw "the Lord sitting upon a throne." Isa. vi, 1.

8. John informs us, that "there was a rainbow round about the throne." Rev. iv, 3. Ezekiel says: "As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about." Ezek. i, 28.

9. John said of the four beasts: "They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." And Isaiah says of the seraphim, that "one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy,

is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." Rev. iv, 8; Isa. vi, 3.

It cannot be supposed that objects diverse in their form, and having different typical designs, would present so many important points of similarity as we find in the several accounts given above. There is, indeed, not one characteristic feature found in either of these three descriptive statements, which does not find its counterpart in one, at least, of the others. Even the points of apparent disagreement support the same conclusion; for these evidently arise from the various objects of the several visions, and the different purposes of the sacred writers. The design of Isaiah, for instance, did not require him to give a description of the seraphim in detail; it would have detracted from the dignity of the great subject of the vision, which was a description of the glory of Jehovah, and the manner of his sending an inspired prophet with a message to his apostate people. So the vision of Ezekiel, and the early part of the vision of John, before the seals were broken and the book opened, were predictive of the ripening purposes of grace, and are consequently accompanied by the appearance of the rainbow, a divinely appointed pledge that the promises of God shall certainly be carried into effect.

I believe the evidence given above is sufficient, when impartially considered, to prove that the cherubic appearances, from the beginning to the end of the sacred canon, were generally identical in form and design. Nor is this merely my opinion. I am anxious to state prominently that this is no discovery of mine, but a judgment formed by many of the most eminent scholars and divines of the present and of the past generation. A late eminent author has ably discussed this subject, and shown at length that the cherubim mentioned in Holy Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, were of the same form, and identical in object. "There cannot," he observes, "I think, be a shadow of doubt but that the covering cherubim and the ark of the tabernacle were studiously copied from the covering

cherubim and the ark of Eden.”—*Faber’s Origin of Pagan Idolatry*, vol. iii, p. 630. Lowman, in his translation of the Apocalypse, has actually introduced the term “cherubim” into the text where “beasts” occurs in our version. Others might be cited, but it is not necessary, as it is not desired to rest the subject on the weight of authority, but on the strength of evidence.

Having thus shown the common character of cherubic appearances throughout the Scriptures, we proceed to ascertain their typical import. And here I cannot but observe, that although much difference of opinion has existed on this subject, and does still exist, the case to my mind is exceedingly plain, and is, in fact, settled by explicit Scriptural teaching. For this is unquestionably taught us, when the four beasts, and the four-and-twenty elders, thus addressed the Lamb in the midst of the throne: “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” Who, or what, but representatives of redeemed humanity could use such language? As, however, my views on this point were given in the last discourse, I will only add here the observation of the learned Dr. William Hales on this passage: “And when, with the Father’s full approbation, He received the book, immediately his sovereignty and omniscience were recognized by the whole *spiritual Church*; for the four *living creatures*, and the four-and-twenty elders, fell down in worship before the Lamb, and sang a new hymn, saying, ‘Worthy art thou, etc.’”

I think it of the utmost consequence, that every reasonable attention should be paid to the judgment of such men as Faber and Hales on a subject of this kind. Compelled, by the nature and extent of their inquiries, to prosecute the most minute and extensive research, and to conduct the most careful and accurate examination of evidence, they do not arrive at a conclusion hastily, or without some weighty reasons for

their judgment. I do not undervalue commentators; but no man can refer to any number of commentaries without perceiving that, to a very great extent, the opinions of earlier writers are copied and perpetuated by later ones. This cannot be done by Biblical critics such as those I have named. Conducting extensive and independent investigations, they have to rest their conclusions on established data; and although I am far from affirming that these conclusions must be well founded, I have no hesitation in saying they are entitled to every consideration and respect. When, therefore, several such writers concur in the same views on such a subject as the typical import of the cherubic figures, the fact weighs strongly in favor of the opinion. It is, indeed, difficult to reconcile the Scriptural facts we have detailed with any other conclusion. Can figures representing the redeemed "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," symbolize anything but redeemed humanity? Can the living creatures of the Apocalypse symbolize this, and the Old Testament cherubim, so essentially like them, have another typical import? I think not. Indeed, the whole vision is in proof of this. What is the vocation of the redeemed as the Church of God in this world? Certainly to proclaim the Divine holiness as a protest against sin, to manifest the glory of the Lord, and to bring penitent sinners to the experience of pardoning mercy. And all this is done by the cherubim in the vision.

We now proceed to consider,

III. The revelation of evangelical truth and agency which is thus given to the world, and their contingent happy and fearful results.

It may be observed here, as a preliminary remark, that the religion of the Bible is designed and adapted for human nature. It follows that its doctrines and means of salvation are likely to be opposed by the same elements of evil in one age as in another. It must not, therefore, be supposed that the evils spoken of in the early part of this discourse, as fearfully



affecting the Hebrew Church, became extinct with the destruction and ruin which involved the Hebrew city and temple. No, they survived these events, and still survive.

It might, indeed, have been expected, that after the Divine displeasure against sin had been fully manifested to the world by the death of God's dear Son, men would have seen and felt its terrible enormity, so as never again to have brought it into contact with religion. This expectation has not been realized. Never has sin been associated with religion more fearfully and fatally than among those who have called themselves after the name of Christ. Nor has this monstrous evil been confined to any section or class of Christians. Men professing the most orthodox doctrines, and using the most unexceptionable ritual, have been found notoriously carnal, worldly, and wicked. Men standing high in that community which claims to be the only true Church, have been seen not only reveling in sin, but actually claiming and exercising the power to sell for money licenses to commit every kind of iniquity. And what seems still more strange, men separated from others on the plea of a more conscientious adherence to Divine truth, than other sections of the Church have been disposed to allow or to enforce, have been heard, when charged with drunkenness, to say, "I pretend to no righteousness of my own; Christ is my righteousness." Others, when told that "the extortioner and the unjust shall not inherit the kingdom of God," reply, "I am unjust in myself, but I have a spotless righteousness in Christ." And thus the redeeming work of Christ, who came into this world, and lived and died, to destroy the works of the devil, is so perverted by the wicked ingenuity of mankind, that he is made to appear to countenance, if not to encourage every vice and iniquity.

The vision before us repudiates and condemns all these monstrous perversions. It stands forth, in the first place, as a remarkable protest against all formality.

The ark of the covenant and propitiatory stained with the

blood of sprinkling, and accompanied by the cherubim and the glory, in their ordinary state and place, presented a sufficiently impressive connection to induce seriousness, reverence, and humiliation in any serious and enlightened mind. But as we see them in this vision, the prospect is overwhelming; and is intended so to be. Here the ark and mercy-seat make an exalted throne. The glory of God fills the temple. The living cherubim hymn the Divine majesty and proclaim his glory. How can a man be careless and formal before such manifestations of energy and power? Yet this is the representation before us.

We have, indeed, more than this; for the proclamation of the seraphim must be considered quite as applicable to the Gospel Church as to the Jewish. It announced, in the most solemn and affecting manner, the holiness of God. Who does not see that, in the strongest possible way, it rebukes and condemns those aberrations of judgment, and manifestations of depravity to which I have referred? If God is so perfectly holy, how can he tolerate sin? If holy, redeemed cherubim veil their faces with their wings, how can men indulging in sin meet his eye?

No reasonable doubt can be entertained that this proclamation of the Divine holiness was intended as an assertion of the fundamental principle of all the economy of grace. If the mind of God could look on sin with allowance, the process of man's deliverance from the penalty due to sin would have involved no serious difficulty. It was the necessity for vindicating the law, and destroying sin from the souls of the saved, which taxed the infinite resources of the Divine mind, and gave us, through the atonement of a suffering Saviour, "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

This assertion of the holiness of God must be recognized as a cardinal truth, and, as such, be applied to all our investigations of doctrine, all our applications of law, all our estimation of character. The grand object of grace is to harmonize man

with the holiness of God, by pardoning his sin, and purifying his soul from all evil. The great requirement, and the reason for it, stand before us thus: "Be ye holy; for I am holy." Too much prominence cannot be given to this particular. It cannot be too often, too earnestly, or too universally applied.

Besides the proclamation of the Divine holiness, the seraphim asserted the universality of the Divine glory: "The whole earth is full of his glory." It is necessary to observe, that by "glory" here, we are not to understand that surpassing excellence which belongs to the Divine majesty, and which is sometimes spoken of as "the glory of God." The term "glory," in this sense, bears just the same relation to excellence that eternity does to time. It is excellence infinite and unlimited. But the glory spoken of here is the *gracious* presence of God. As the shekinah glory over the cherubim was there to accept the blood of propitiation, and by this means to dispense grace; so, in the case before us, we are assured that this gracious presence is universal, and extends everywhere to the habitations of mankind. The words, therefore, contain a very gracious evangelical truth; namely, that, through the one great Sacrifice for sin, the whole earth is filled with the gracious presence of God; that wherever there is a heart to pray, there is a God to hear; that "in the void waste or in the city full," on the hill-top or deep in the most secluded glen, wherever there is a soul to want, there is also the merciful, all-sustaining power of God to hear, succor, and save.

But this announcement speaks of something besides privilege: it is quite in harmony with the whole scope of the vision; it is a revelation of justice, law, and terror. It asserts that wherever there is a man to sin, there God is a witness of the outrage on his holiness, the violation of his law; that as wide as the display of his mercy is the revelation of his holiness and power; that wherever there is wickedness, there God actually is grieved, provoked, angry, and preparing for

judgment. What a view does this open up to us of the spiritualities of this world! We, weak and polluted as we are, look abroad on the prevalence of violence and deceit, of cursing and blasphemy, of lying and injustice, of uncleanness and idolatry, and are shocked at the constant recurrence and fearful power of sin. But if such is our view and feeling, what must be the judgment of an infinitely holy and ever-present God? Well might the foundations of the temple tremble at the word of Jehovah. A pure and holy God everywhere in contact with sin! The glory of his presence, intending and preparing to save, is seen everywhere insulted, provoked, and scorned! The mind cannot sustain the view which this Scripture presents, but sinks overwhelmed beneath a deep sense of the evil of sin and the long-suffering of God.

The natural tendency of all this, however, clearly is to produce the effect which was produced on the mind of the prophet, to impress the conscience with a strong conviction of the terrible evil of sin, and its intolerable condemning power. Who, indeed, in the presence of such truth, does not exclaim, "Woe is me! I am undone, for I am unclean!"

We have now to consider another element of evangelical truth which this subject suggests. We have seen the terrible demerit of sin, when committed in opposition to the Divine purity, and in the presence of the Divine glory. When sin is regarded as the allowed and cherished will and way of a human soul in rebellion against God, nothing can exceed the intensity of its evil, nothing surpass the greatness of the danger it occasions. Here, however, we have another view of sin. Here we see sin loathed, hated, deprecated. Here we see a human soul panting for deliverance from its uncleanness, and earnestly desiring to be freed from its pollution. And when seen in this aspect, where is the power of sin? Where its energy of resistance? So complete is the scheme of redemption, so ample and efficient the atoning power of the

Great Sacrifice, that no sooner is sin felt to be an evil, and its presence and power deplored, than the fire from the altar of offering is applied, and the "iniquity is taken away," the "sin is purged." Sin, the choice of the mind, loved and cherished, is a giant evil, which binds the spirit in chains of adamant, and leads it captive to destruction. Sin, repented of, lamented, the object of abhorrence, falls powerless before the simple prayer of distress, and perishes through faith in the blood of sacrifice.

This vision, regarded in an evangelical aspect, thus far presents to us a splendid revelation of the holiness and glory of the Lord. The effect of that revelation on the human mind is to produce a conviction of sin, and to make deliverance from its presence and power earnestly desired. We have then a vivid exhibition of the facility with which the guilt and pollution of sin are removed by atoning sacrifice. Nor should we quite overlook the agency by which this application of the saving power is effected: "Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Isaiah vi, 6, 7. Those who will make the seraphim here holy angels, must, if they fairly consider the case, find a serious difficulty in one respect. Angels are never, in Holy Scripture, described as instruments in the communication of grace. They are frequently manifested as ministers, working out providential deliverance; and as messengers, communicating information. But throughout the whole Bible it is manifestly seen to be the Divine purpose to save man by the instrumental agency of his brother man. So here, in perfect consistency with this great principle, the representatives of the spiritual Church—of redeemed humanity—apply the great atonement, and the prophet is saved. Not saved, be it observed, by the seraphim; the virtue was not in the hand, but in the fire from the altar.



So that one of the seraphim here does what is universally admitted to be the vocation of the Church, namely, brings the penitent sinner to meet the atoning Saviour, that the ruin of the one may be met by the merit and mercy of the other.

In perfect harmony with this proceeding, a voice is then heard to come from the glory on the throne, saying: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" The message of God's mercy is to be sent to sinful men. They are not to be allowed to pass on unmolested in their career of rebellion. Men who have been pardoned and renewed, whose lips have been touched with fire from the altar, such men are to go as ambassadors for Christ to a perishing world. And the twofold inquiry before us indicates, as we have already observed, the two essential features of this mission. "Whom shall I send?" God must send. No merely human qualifications, no amount of natural aptitude for teaching, no earthly acquirements, will constitute a man a messenger from God to his fellow-men without a call from the Divine Spirit; the person *must be sent*. And, more than this, the will of the person so sent must bow before the Divine will, his spirit must enter into the Divine purpose, and accept the weighty obligation as a commission from God. "Who will go for us?" *Go*, not for his own ease or comfort, not for his own wealth or honor, not for a profession, but for God, for the Triune Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. How glorious this vocation! How full of weighty responsibility this work!

We have now to direct attention to this message, and its contingent results. Before taking a general view of its evangelical bearing, it will be necessary to consider its reference to the Hebrew people at the close of their history, and just prior to their excision from their covenant relation to God. The application of this language to the Jews of this period is not a mere theological inference, or historical induction; it is the direct teaching of Holy Scripture. Matthew, (xiii, 14, 15,)

Mark, (iv, 10-12,) and Luke, (viii, 9, 10,) all refer to this language of the prophet, and quote it as affording the reason why our Lord taught in parables: "Therefore speak I to them in parables, because they seeing see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand." John, also, has the same words. Having reviewed the whole course of Christ's public ministry, and while preparing to detail the great events of his passion and death, he relates the last words the Saviour delivered to the people before he hid himself from them, to spend the remainder of his time with his disciples: "While ye have light believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." The evangelist, seeing his Master's public career closed, and remembering that his life, ministry, and miracles had fully verified every prediction, and gloriously proved his Divine mission and character, felt called on to assign the reason why the people did not believe in him, and receive him as the Son of God. He does this, stating the fact, and quoting Isaiah's prophecy, as supplying the reason, thus: "But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them." John xii, 37-40.

What, then, is the sense of the evangelists? Are we to understand that God judicially blinded the Jews in the time of Christ, and hardened their hearts, so that, literally, "they could not believe?" We say, No, most distinctly, to this inquiry; first, because it is contrary to the attributes of his nature; and, secondly, because that supposition is not necessary to our obtaining a clear and consistent sense of the passage. As an able author on this text has observed, "The usual idea

of God's hardening the heart is false. It is conceived that he *infuses* evil. But this cannot be. The perfection of holiness himself, 'he cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man.'"—*Govett on Isaiah*, p. 145. It cannot be, therefore, that the effect is to be attributed to this cause. Nor does the case require a solution so violent. Man is a depraved and guilty creature; the scheme of redemption offers him ample means of salvation, and the acceptance of these means is urged on him by the word of God, and the direct influence of his Holy Spirit. And these gracious interpositions are usually continued on the consciences of men, and sometimes with extraordinary power. When, however, men are so determined to sin, despite all this influence, its continuance would only enhance their condemnation, and its withdrawal must be followed by the consequences detailed in the language of the prophet. This appears to be the correct view of the case before us. The Jews of our Saviour's day seem to have resisted so much evidence, to have so fearfully perverted God's truth, that more plain, explicit, or numerous interpositions could only have the effect of involving them in deeper ruin. Having ascribed the miracles of Jesus to the power of Satan, they had sinned against the Holy Ghost so fatally, that his influence was, in some measure, withdrawn, and their speedy ruin was the result.

All that remains is for us to notice the prophet's message, as it may afford some rays of evangelical light and truth applicable to our own day. Before doing this, I will give the version of this passage which I think best renders the sense of the prophet into our own language. The tenth verse is from Mr. Govett's translation, the three preceding lines from Dr. Henderson :

"And He said: Go say to this people,  
Go on hearing, but understand not;  
Go on seeing, but perceive not.  
For this people's heart is waxed gross,  
And their ears are dull of hearing,  
And their eyes they have closed,

Lest at any time they should see with their eyes,  
And hear with their ears,  
And understand with their hearts,  
And be converted, and I should heal them."

Nothing can be more clear than is the Divine purpose in sending inspired truth to the children of men, as set forth in this portion of holy writ. Hearing was intended to produce understanding; seeing, to result in perception. The communication of Divine truth to the mind of man was designed by God to produce in man these important results, and the Holy Spirit's influence accompanies and gives power to the word, for this purpose. It is thus that we obtain a just conception of our own character, and discern our true relation to God. By this means we apprehend the deadly evil of sin, its terrible demerit, and the inevitable ruin which must follow its continued indulgence. Nor are truth and spiritual influence given merely to produce these results, desirable as they are. Understanding and perception are not salvation. These are wrought in us, not merely for their own sake, but for ulterior objects, which, indeed, are set forth in the after part of the passage:

"They should see with their eyes,  
And hear with their ears,  
And understand with their heart,  
And turn and be healed."

This is the process of grace. There are two results set before us in these words, "*turn*, and be healed." For the first of these, our authorized version has, "and convert;" and most translators have made it more accordant to English ears by rendering it, "and be converted;" thus making it just equivalent to the following phrase, "and be healed." The original is more precise, and gives the meaning of the prophet with great perspicuity and force. The term which our version renders "convert," is a participle derived from a verb which signifies to "return," or "turn one's self;" and there can be no doubt that Dr. Henderson has given the sense of the prophet in the words,

“and turn” (or return) “and be healed.” The first of these words meets the case of every sinner; it expresses his turning away from his course of sin, and his return to God. It is, indeed, nothing more than a strictly theological mode of speaking of repentance. This, be it observed, is a result which the man whose mind is enlightened, and whose heart is humbled under a sense of sin, is enjoined to perform. Not that he can do anything toward it without assisting grace; but he is to do it with this assistance; it is his act. He must *return* from his course of sin to God.

He has, then, to “be healed.” This is an act wrought in him by the Spirit of God. It consists of two distinct blessings, which are prominently set before us in the case of the prophet. The man who thus turns from his sins, and turns in contrition and humility to God, may expect to have his iniquity taken away, that is, the guilt of his sin removed by a full and gracious act of pardoning mercy. His sins are all forgiven. And, besides this, “his sin is purged.” His corrupt nature is renewed. He is born again, not of the will of man, or of the flesh, but by the Spirit of God.

It may be necessary, on a point of such vital importance as this, to observe here, that these two particulars are not placed in this connection by the prophet, as cause and effect. God does not pardon and renew penitent sinners because they have repented, or on the ground of their repentance. The death of Christ is the only ground for a sinner’s acceptance and justification. We have “redemption in his blood;” “without shedding of blood is no remission.” Nor is this repentance the immediate means through which we realize mercy in Christ. “By faith ye are saved;” are “justified by faith.” “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

But while this great salvation can thus be realized by all to whom this message of truth comes, on their turning from their sins, and believing in Christ, it is equally certain, from the Scripture before us, that many to whom this word of grace



comes, will, notwithstanding its saving tendency, remain unblessed and saved. Where sin is loved and practiced, saving power is effectually repelled. Where this is the case, the most sacred and impressive ordinances of religion will not only be utterly unavailing, but will tend to darken the understanding and harden the heart. Some men seem to think that a frequent attendance on public worship, a regular practice of external religious duties, will, in some measure, lessen the demerit of sin, or ward off the fearful consequences of its guilt. The Gospel knows nothing of such an implied compromise. When the mind cleaves to sin, it is in a state of rebellion against God; and every pretense to serve or worship him, while in this state, by any person, only serves to aggravate his offenses, and to give intensity to the iniquity of his doings. In this state of mind he cannot savingly believe.

We have thus passed through our inquiries into this important portion of Scripture; and submit to the serious reader, that it presents a very remarkable development in the progressive dispensations of grace to mankind.

It is not intended here to refer further to the external manifestations made to the prophet as constituting such development. These have been already noticed; such as, making the whole temple the seat of the Divine presence, the exaltation of the mercy-seat as a throne, the animation of the cherubim, and the splendor of the glory. All these, in themselves, were full of meaning, and calculated to give to a thoughtful Hebrew, not only very impressive, but very enlarged views of the religious economy under which he lived; but they have been sufficiently discussed.

The first point to which it is now desired to draw attention is this: the potent evangelical principles which the vision before us identified with the Hebrew ritual. It cannot admit of a doubt that, in the beginning, the simple rites of patriarchism were, by Divine appointment and by Divine teaching, essentially connected with the moral conduct and individual experi-

ence of worshipers. Hence we are told, that "Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts." The worship produced its designed salutary effects on the conduct and on the mind of the worshiper.

Nor is it intended to intimate, that when this sacrificial service had been expanded and enlarged, so as to reach the dimensions which it presented when performed in the glorious structure reared up for that purpose by Solomon, it was, in this state of development, less adapted to affect the heart and life than that which Abel performed. On the contrary, it is believed that the latter, seen by men hating sin, and desiring to do the will of God, would present a wider range of teaching, and a more effective religious influence. We cannot now measure either the teaching or the influence, but by its results. And here the prospect is most gloomy. Sin was not the exception, but the rule. The Israelites were at this time "a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers."

In this vision, however, we find the sacred services of the law brought out in all their saving efficacy. The holiness of God is proclaimed. The awakening and convincing character of the proclamation is exhibited. The true nature and effects of sacrifice are set forth: sin is purged, and iniquity is taken away. Merely ceremonial cleanness is here repudiated. Ritual observance is not overlooked, but made the means to an end—the putting away of the guilt and power of sin from the conscience of the worshiper. The vision, therefore, stands before us as uniting the simplicity of the earliest ages with the consummate glory of the latest. It shows sacrifice in its true and proper character, as the means of "putting away sin;" and by consequence teaches the inutility of all those sacrifices which did not produce that result.

In another respect the information afforded by this case is most important. It clearly exhibits the true character of

the election of the Hebrews. No fact in history is more patent than that this people regarded themselves as individually and collectively secure of salvation, on the ground of their lineal descent from Abraham, and their consequent covenant relation to God. A flood of light is cast on that claim by the Scripture under consideration. It clearly shows the high and glorious privilege to which they had been raised. But it tells, in the strongest possible terms, how they had sinned against all this privilege, until the cup of their iniquity was so nearly full that remedy seemed hopeless, and the mercy of Heaven has no further message for them than this :

“Go on hearing, but understand not ;  
Go on seeing, but perceive not.”

Has not the whole subject a voice of warning for the Christians of our own land? How many thousands among us, Sabbath after Sabbath, crowd the sanctuaries of God, hear his holy word, bow the knee before him ; and yet live in the practice of well-known and strongly cherished sins! “Be not deceived ; God is not mocked ; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” Gal. vi, 7, 8.

## DISCOURSE VI.

## THE LIKENESS OF A MAN UPON THE THRONE.

And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.—EZEKIEL i, 26.

THE ruin and desolation threatened to the kingdom of Judah by the Lord through Isaiah were, in the days of Ezekiel, impending over that devoted people. The measure of their iniquities was full. The prophet himself, with many others of his countrymen, was a captive in Chaldea. Jerusalem had not yet been destroyed; but the terrible ruin of the throne of David, the temple of the Lord, and of the holy city, was about to take place. As preliminary to these fearful events, explanatory of the purpose of God, illustrative of the principles of Divine government, and confirmatory of his great promise of redemption to the world, the Lord presented to the mind of this inspired seer some of the most wonderful prophetic visions which are described in the sacred books. Of these, the most remarkable are those which are connected with the subject before us, wherein the glory of the Lord is manifested in connection with living cherubim, and an exalted throne, on which sits "the likeness of a man."

That we may apprehend as clearly and as fully as possible the instruction conveyed to us by the Holy Spirit in these Scriptures, we will endeavor:

I. To give such an outline of these visions as may enable us to form a correct and adequate estimate of their scope and importance.

II. To ascertain the import of these visions in their bearing on the mind of the prophet, and on the religious interests of the Hebrew people.

III. To consider the revelations made in these visions in connection with the economy of grace, and as a further development of the process of redemption.

I. The prophet was a priest, the son of a Hebrew priest named Buzi, and had, before he was called to exercise his high office, been carried a captive to Chaldea. Here he had lived in exile five years from the time of Jehoiachin's captivity. He was located with a colony of Hebrew captives on the banks of the River Chebar (or Chaboris) in Mesopotamia. So situated, the prophet gives a particular narrative of his first vision. He informs us that he saw a whirlwind coming out of the north, with a great cloud and infolding fire; and out of the midst of the fire and cloud came four living creatures. These creatures had the general appearance of the human form; yet with this form they united together parts of the likeness of the lion, the ox, and the eagle. Each had four faces, one of each of these, besides the face of a man. They had hands as a man, and their appearance was intensely bright and sparkling, like "polished brass and burning coals of fire," while fire, as if from flaming torches, blazed and glared from between and around them, accompanied by the flashing of vivid lightning. As the prophet beheld this strange sight, he observed that these living creatures were accompanied by immensely large wheels, as if made of precious stones; and the wheels were full of eyes and of life, the spirit of the living creatures being in the wheels; so that, whithersoever the spirit was to go, thither they went. Each of these living creatures had four wings: with two they covered their bodies, and the other two stood erect over their heads; and over their wings there was seen a firmament as the glitter of crystal, exhibiting a terrible appearance. When these united living creatures, and the wheels, and the fire moved, the wings made a tumultuous noise as the voice of many waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of an army removing its camp; and above the firmament that was over the heads of the living



creatures, bright as a sapphire stone, was the appearance of a throne, and "upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it." This man appeared as beaming forth above and below with a fiery brightness. Above or round about the throne was a rainbow seen. And all this, we are told, was the glory of the Lord—the shekinah of God; and when the prophet saw this strange sight, he fell on his face to the ground. (Ezek. i, 1–28.)

In remarking on this wonderful vision, the first point to be noted is the evident fact, that here also, as in the vision of Isaiah, the sacred typical things of the inner sanctuary are presented to our view. These are, indeed, much modified in appearance, to suit the great purpose of the Spirit in this Divine revelation; but the fact is undoubted. It is, indeed, distinctly stated by the prophet, when the same vision was repeated to him: he then observes, "I knew that they were the cherubim." Ezek. x, 20. Yet these are not only exhibited as being full of life, and replete with terrible grandeur, but as being accompanied with immense wheels also replete with life and full of eyes.

The compound forms which these cherubic figures exhibit to our view present, perhaps, one of the most perplexing problems in Scriptural exposition. I have met with nothing more sensible on this subject than the following: "We can think of no reason why the singular combination of animal forms which it presents, should have been set upon that of man as the trunk or center of the whole, unless it were to exhibit the higher elements of humanity in some kind of organic connection with certain distinctive properties of the inferior creation. The nature of man is immensely the highest upon earth, and towers loftily above all the rest by powers peculiar to itself. And yet we can easily conceive how this very nature of man might be greatly raised and ennobled, by having superadded to his own inherent qualities those of which the other animal

forms here mentioned stand as the appropriate types.”—*Fairbairn’s Typology*, vol. i, p. 221. And thus these cherubic appearances may be intended to place before us the ideal representation of humanity in its highest possible elevation and perfection.

These cherubim, however, are seen in connection with flaming fire. It seems to encompass them, and to fill up all the space between them. Nor can we, with such a representation before us, fail to remember that something of this kind appears to have been the original appearance of the cherubim. When we read of them in Eden, we are told of “the cherubim and the fire which turned itself.” And when this prophet alludes to that primeval scene, he says: “Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.” Ezek. xxviii, 13, 14. It seems, therefore, that at the original institution of the cherubim the “fire of wrath,” of God’s wrath against sin, was manifestly displayed. Over the cherubim we find a glorious and exalted throne, and on the throne the likeness of the appearance of a man. Of this human form it is said: “From the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.” Ezek. i, 27. How similar is this to John’s account of his vision of the Redeemer! “His eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace: his countenance was as the sun shining in its strength.” Rev. i, 14–16.

Lastly, round about the throne the prophet saw a rainbow. It seems from the description as if the glory of the Lord, beaming forth from the throne, threw its light on the surrounding atmosphere, so as to produce this appearance. The bow was a standing token of God’s covenant with man; a permanent pledge that what the Lord had promised should certainly come to pass.

Having described this glorious appearance, the prophet informs us what followed. The Man upon the throne called to him, and commissioned him to go in his name to the Hebrews in captivity. In the communication which he dictated the wicked and obdurate character of the people is described, and the prophet is instructed by explicit direction, and strengthened by the communication of the Spirit, for his arduous work. (Ezek. i, ii, 1-10.) The points of similarity and of difference which are found between this call of Ezekiel and that of Isaiah, discussed in the last discourse, are worthy of a passing notice. Both these prophets are called to communicate the word of the Lord to their countrymen. Both receive their message from the Divine Person who sits on a throne above the living cherubim. Both are informed of the character of the people to whom they are sent. But with this similarity there is a difference—that, while the son of Amoz was sent to a people whose final impenitence and impending ruin were foreseen and declared, Ezekiel is sent to the captives, from whom, notwithstanding their wickedness, the Lord was about to rear up a living Church, a seed to serve him.

The prophet then proceeds to state the mission which was confided to him, and the manner in which he was strengthened and directed in his work. "Then," says he, "the Spirit took me up, and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing, saying, Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place." Then the Spirit lifted him up, and laid hold on him, and he went in bitterness, and in the heat of his spirit, with the hand of Jehovah strong upon him, and came to the captives dwelling by the River Chebar. Here he sat down seven days, as if absorbed in silent and overwhelming grief. At the end of that time the word of the Lord came to him, and he received his commission to warn the people of their wickedness, and was assured that he would be held responsible for the faithful discharge of this duty. He was then commanded to go forth to the plain, and, having obeyed, he again saw the vision which he had seen on

the banks of the Chebar, and received further directions from the Lord. Ezek. iii, 12-27.

The manner in which the prophet is sent to begin his course of ministerial labors, is very remarkable and affecting. He does not go alone. All the terrible apparatus of wheels and cherubim bearing the throne of God follow him, the wings of the cherubim embracing each other, and a loud voice proclaiming blessing to the glory of the Lord. In this manner Ezekiel devoted himself to his arduous duty.

The prophet, in the four chapters following, (iv, v, vi, and vii,) gives an account of the means he was directed to use, by signs, and types, and verbal declarations, for carrying into effect the Divine purpose. This part of the book, however, interesting and important as it is, in its exhibition of the prophet's fidelity and zeal, and in its bearing on the character and destiny of the Hebrews, does not come under our present consideration: we accordingly pass on to the beginning of the eighth chapter, where a new scene of great interest and sublimity opens to us.

Here we are informed, that the prophet was sitting in his house on a certain day, which he particularly specifies, when "the hand of the Lord Jehovah fell upon him." And he "looked, and behold, a resemblance," (that is, of a human figure,) "as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins and downward, fire; and from his loins and upward, as the appearance of light-splendor, as the glitter of *chasmal*." And the prophet says: "He put forth the form of a hand, and took me by a lock of my head; and the Spirit raised me up between the earth and the heavens, and brought me to Jerusalem in the visions of God, to the door of the inner gate that looks toward the north." Here the prophet again saw the vision which he had seen in the plain—the cherubim, the fire, and the glory. Here, in the courts of the temple, the Lord called attention to the abominations by which he was surrounded. The first object is called "the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy." What image is here intended

is not known. Some have supposed it to have been an image of Baal; others of Astarte, or the Syrian Venus. But the attention of the prophet is not allowed to rest on the element of idolatry, which is thus publicly prominent in the very precincts of the sanctuary. He is taken to a hole in the wall of the temple, and caused to make it larger; upon which he "went in, and saw every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed upon the walls round about." Nor did these profane objects remain unnoticed in the house of the Lord. The prophet saw seventy of the ancients of the house of Israel burning incense before these idolatrous objects of their adoration. Nor was this all. The prophet was next led to the gate of the Lord's house which was toward the north; and there he saw "women weeping for Tammuz," or Adonis, who was fabled to have been slain on Mount Lebanon, and whose name and fabulous fate gave rise to the most filthy idolatry of ancient times. Again, the prophet was taken to the inner court of the Lord's house, "and, behold, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five-and-twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshiped the sun toward the east."

Thus the Lord showed his servant that one purpose for which the house of Israel had been protected and blessed as his peculiar people, had been utterly defeated. Instead of being, as they were designed to be, a standing protest against idolatry, a nation adhering wholly to the worship of the living and true God, it was shown that they had adopted the idolatry of every surrounding people, from Egypt to Persia, and had actually introduced its vilest abominations, under the sanction of the priests and the princes, into the house of the Lord. Ezek. viii.

This exposure of Hebrew infidelity was a prelude to the judgment and punishment of that apostate people. Having shown these scenes to the prophet, the Lord cried with a loud voice,



calling those who had the charge of the city to draw near: upon which, six men appeared, each with a weapon in his hand; one of them being "clothed in linen, and having a writer's ink-horn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brazen altar." At this time the glorious shekinah left the place of its residence over the wings of the cherubim in the most holy place, and, coming out of that sanctuary, appeared on the threshold of the temple. And this glory then commanded the man with the ink-horn to go through the city, and set a mark upon every one who really lamented the wicked and apostate character of the people. Then he commanded the others to go after him, and slay, without distinction or pity, every one of either sex, old or young, on whom the mark was not found. The prophet, on seeing this almost universal ruin of his people begun, fell on his face, and implored some mitigation of the punishment. But the only answer his prayer received was a confirmation of the judgment. Ezek. ix.

It is not necessary for us to attempt an explanation of every part of the process detailed in this chapter; the general scope and meaning are sufficiently obvious. It may, however, be observed, that it is by no means necessary to a correct apprehension of the meaning of this portion of holy writ that we regard the description of the prophet, in respect of this exhibition of idolatry, as intended to be received in a literal sense. There are great difficulties in the way of such an interpretation. How, for instance, could seventy men be burning incense in a chamber so closed up that the prophet had to enlarge a hole in the wall to obtain admission? The remarks of Dr. Fairbairn on this point deserve serious attention: "The idolatrous scenes described one after another have manifestly the appearance of separate and cumulative proofs of the people's appetite for heathenish pollutions, rather than the united and consecutive parts of some one religious festival. And still further, as the scenes in question were those sub-

mitted to the eye of the prophet in *the visions of God*, what we are naturally led to expect in them is, not a plain matter-of-fact description of things literally enacted at any set time in the temple, but rather a combined and concentrated view of the prevailing idolatries, gathered from every side, and portrayed, as in one dark and revolting picture, within the temple of Jerusalem. That temple was the image, as well as the center, of the whole kingdom. As the heart of the nation had its seat there, so there also, in the mongrel and polluted character of the worship celebrated, the guilt of the people found its representation; and hence, when the object was to give a clear and palpable exhibition of the crying abominations that existed in the land, the scene was most fitly laid in the temple, and assumed the form of things seen and transacted in its courts. But we are no more to regard the things themselves in the precise form and combination here given to them, as all actually meeting together at any particular moment in the temple-worship, and simply transcribed by the prophet from the occurrences of real life, than to regard the instructions that immediately follow—to set a mark for preservation on the foreheads of some, and to destroy the rest with weapons of slaughter—as actually put in force at the time and in the manner there described.”—*Fairbairn on Ezekiel*, p. 86.

On another point, however, this able author is far less convincing. His reasons for making the man clothed in linen, with the ink-horn, the great High Priest of our profession, the Lord our Redeemer, are very unsatisfactory. We will not, however, canvass these reasons, but notice one particular, which seems to be a fatal objection to this induction. Was not the GLORY which left the propitiatory, and spoke to the man clothed in linen, the Second Person of the blessed Trinity, the Divine Word? Is not this an admitted fact? Have we, then, the same Divine Person speaking and spoken to at the same moment, and in the same place?

The manifestation of God's anger against sin is exhibited in this vision in a manner which presents several particulars of special interest to our notice. An almost universal apostasy and profligacy prevail. God arises from his place in the most holy sanctuary, and comes forth to judgment. Inflexible, however, as he is in the punishment of sin, the sword is stayed until the few righteous are saved. The manner in which this is done, and the test of character which is adopted, are remarkable. It is not a profession of godliness which saves, it is no attention to outward rites which obtains deliverance: nothing but a plain proof of a deep and painful conviction of the dishonor done to God by the prevalence of sin, a sincere grief for the abounding of iniquity, is sufficient to procure exemption from impending ruin.

The scene which we have just contemplated is followed by another inflexion of the vision, of great interest and importance. The prophet, having witnessed the execution of the Divine sentence in the punishment of the wicked, and seen the messenger clothed in linen with the ink-horn by his side return, saying that the Divine command had been obeyed, had his attention called to the throne over the living cherubim; and he now saw there a glory, as the appearance of a sapphire stone. A voice from the Divine person now commanded the man clothed in linen, and he accordingly went to the cherubim, when one of the cherubs took burning coals from between the cherubim, and gave them to him, and he took them, and went forth to scatter them over the city in obedience to the Divine behest. Immediately afterward it was cried to the cherubim and the wheels, in the hearing of the prophet, "Roll on;" when the glory of the Lord which had stood on the threshold of the temple arose, and took its place on the throne above the cherubim, and these living creatures spread forth their wings, and ascended from the earth, and stood over the east gate of the house of the Lord. The prophet here enlarges his description of the cherubim, and assures us that

what he saw in this vision was precisely the same as he had seen by the River Chebar.

At this time, the prophet says, "the Spirit lifted me up, and brought me to the east gate of the Lord's house." Taken thus to follow the cherubic vision, he saw five-and-twenty men, princes of the people, assembled there. The Lord then said to the prophet: "These are the men that devise mischief, and give wicked counsel to the city: therefore prophesy against them, prophesy, O son of man." Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he delivered to these men an earnest and impressive address, in which utter ruin was denounced on them on account of their sins. During the delivery of this address, one of these princes, named Pelatiah, died, which led the prophet to break off, fall on his face, and exclaim, "O Lord Jehovah, wilt thou make a complete end of the remnant of Israel?" In response to which, the word of the Lord came unto him, and he delivered an address full of point and power, and which forms a suitable close to these splendid revelations. This passage is unhappily rendered in the authorized version; and is rescued from obscurity, and placed before us in a very lucid manner, by Dr. Fairbairn.

This closing communication of the prophet, in its correct sense, brings out the great fact of Jerusalem's irrevocable overthrow, and its future restoration by the return of those Hebrews in exile among the heathen. I give Dr. Fairbairn's version of the passage, with his exposition. Chap. xi, 14: "And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 15. Son of man, thy brethren, thy brethren are the men of thy redemption [thy *goalim*, thy redemption-men] and all the house of Israel, the whole to whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem say, Be ye far from the Lord, to us is given this land for an inheritance. 16. Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because I have removed them far off among the heathen, and because I have scattered them among the countries, and have been to them for a sanctuary during a little season in the

countries whither they have come, 17. Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, I will also gather you from the peoples, and assemble you from the countries whither ye have been scattered, and I give to you the territory of Israel. 18. And they come thither, and they take away all its detestable things, and all its abominations out of it. 19. And I give them one heart, and will put a new spirit within them," etc.

"The full import of the first part of this declaration has been considerably obscured by regarding the *goelim* spoken of at the beginning as simply the relations or kindred of the prophet, (which the word never properly means,) and by mistaking the precise object of the affirmation made respecting them. The prophet, by birth a priest, felt, when he saw the priesthood in Jerusalem doomed to destruction, as if his own nearest kinsmen were given up to ruin; so that it behooved him to do for them the part of the *goel*, and plead or vindicate their cause. According to the law of Moses, the right of the *goel* belonged only to the brother, or, failing him, to the relative who stood nearest in blood, and so might fitly be regarded as the proper advocate, deputy, or avenger of the individual. (Lev. xxv, 25-48.) Hence it was quite natural for the priest Ezekiel to identify himself with the priesthood in Jerusalem so far as to feel called upon to espouse their cause, and even to regard his own interest as in a manner bound up with theirs. But that natural feeling, the Lord now taught him, must give way to a higher one: 'Thy brethren, thy brethren,' (the repetition of the word indicating, as very commonly in Hebrew, the stress that was intended to be laid upon relationship,) 'thy proper, thy real brethren, these are no longer the priests in Jerusalem, with whom thou art bound by the natural ties of blood, and a common right to serve in the temple: in place of these, a royal priesthood, which the Lord is going to form for himself out of the wreck of the natural community. Look no more to Jerusalem, but to thine expatriated countrymen, thy fellow-exiles on the banks



of the Chebar, and the house of Israel generally, the whole of them that survive. And in them, despised as they are by the inhabitants of Jerusalem, see the true brethren whom the Lord is preparing as a spiritual seed for the glory of his name. Go and do for *them* the *goel's* part; seek *their* deliverance.'"—*Fairbairn on Ezekiel*, pp. 106, 111, 112.

The prophet having received this important information, which, indeed, it seems to have been one of the great ends of these glorious visions to communicate, the cherubim and the glory rose from the east gate of the temple, where this took place, hovered a while over the city, again arose and remained some time on the Mount of Olives, after which it departed and was seen no more. Meanwhile the prophet was taken back to the banks of the Chebar, and left to pursue his course of ministerial duty among his captive brethren, for the accomplishment of those great purposes of mercy which the Lord had shown him to be so essential to the carrying into effect of the great scheme of redemption.

II. We have to ascertain the important information which these visions were intended to communicate to the mind of the prophet, and their consequent influence on the cause of religion among the Hebrews of that day.

In proceeding to consider the first of these particulars, it will be necessary to notice the undoubted unity of intention and purpose which pervades these several wonderful revelations. The glorious cherubim which appeared on the banks of the Chebar were identical with the appearances at Jerusalem: so that the prophet actually assures us that he knew the features of the cherubic countenances: "And the likeness of their faces were the same faces that I saw by the River Chebar, their appearances and themselves." Ezek. x, 22. All the other parts of the wondrous apparatus were identical—the cherubim, the fire, the wheels, the throne, and the glory. It is important that the identity of form and unity of character of these visions be fully recognized.

In order, however, to apprehend the exact information communicated to the mind of the prophet by these visions, we must form a true conception of his state and circumstances. Ezekiel, then, was a pious Hebrew priest, who, at the time he received this vision, had been five years a captive exile in Chaldea. When he was carried away from his native land, the kingdom of Judah was virtually subverted. For Nebuchadnezzar, on that occasion, having the entire mastery of Jerusalem, had taken away the king and royal family, and princes, the wealth and power of Judah; even the artisans were included, and none left save the poorest and most insignificant of the people; Zedekiah being placed in charge of the country as governor under the King of Babylon. (2 Kings xxiv, 12-16.) In these circumstances any unbiased mind would have despaired of the continued independence of Judah and Jerusalem. Yet this was not the case with Ezekiel or his fellow-captives: they still clung to the idea that the throne of David and the temple of the Lord would be preserved. Indeed, the Hebrews of this period identified the "hope of Israel" with the preservation of Jerusalem.

In such circumstances, when this holy man was called to enter upon the prophetic office, it was necessary that he should have more correct and enlarged views of the Divine purposes respecting Israel. These were communicated in the visions now under our consideration. It must not be forgotten that Ezekiel was undoubtedly aware of the manner of Isaiah's call to the prophetic office, or at least of his preparation for discharging the highest functions which were involved in that office. It must then have had a most important effect on the mind of Ezekiel, that he, in a Gentile country, a captive exile far away from the holy land of Judea and the holy sanctuary of Jerusalem, should see a vivid revelation of the living cherubim and the glory of the Lord, equal, if not far superior in splendor to anything seen by the son of Amoz in the holy temple. Yet so it was. The whole of this revelation was

made to Ezekiel with a grandeur and completeness of outline, and a minute fullness of detail, surpassed by nothing of the kind in the sacred record. One truth more than any other was clearly set before the prophet's mind in this vision, namely, that the glory of the Lord, in its highest and best manifestations, was independent of any particular locality. This was shown here, for the first time, by the appearance of enormous living wheels full of eyes, which moved in any direction in obedience to the will of the Spirit which pervaded the living creatures. Here, then, on the plains of Mesopotamia, the son of Buzi found himself in as direct communication with God—as fully in the presence of his glory—indeed, much more highly favored with access to the Divine Majesty, than if, as the high priest of his nation, he had entered the most holy sanctuary at Jerusalem on the great day of atonement. It is impossible but that this should have made a great impression upon the mind of Ezekiel. He would see in such a fact at least a proof that the God of Israel would, and did, manifest himself to his faithful servants in any place, however remote, as gloriously as in his holy temple.

It was also most important that Ezekiel should have the information given him by these visions of the fatal extent to which the priests, the princes, and the people of Jerusalem had apostatized from God; and of the speedy and certain ruin of the city, temple, and polity of the Hebrews as the dire result. It was the glory of the Lord from whence the voice spake to the prophet, and commissioned him to go and speak unto Israel in the name of the Lord. (Ezek. i, 28; ii.) It was the same Divine Person who gave him the roll, and appointed him a watchman to Israel. It was the same who met him by appointment in the plain. (Ezek. iii, 22, 23.) From him he had directions to sketch on a tile the impending siege of Jerusalem; to lie in a particular posture, bearing the iniquity of Jerusalem; to eat abominable bread; to cut off his hair, and to divide it. (Ezek. iv and v.) But none of these prophetic

visionary signs, expressive as they were, were so adapted to enlighten and affect the mind of Ezekiel as the scenes spread before him when he was taken in the visions of God to the temple at Jerusalem. When he saw the holiest places, and the highest and most venerated officers of the city and sanctuary, profaned by the vilest idolatry, and polluted by the foulest sin, he must then have despaired of Jerusalem. But the fate of the city was not left to the prophet's opinion or induction. He saw the judgment take place, the pious marked for deliverance, the wicked residue devoted to ruin. He heard, while interceding for his brethren the priests, that he must abandon all hopes of them, and seek a new and spiritual priesthood among the exiles of Chaldea. More than all, the prophet saw the glory of the Lord abandon the temple. It came from the holy place, hovered over the threshold, ascended to the throne of glory over the living cherubim, and ultimately passed over to the Mount of Olives, and then was seen no more.

We must not, however, imagine that this glory was seen and regarded merely as a luminous cloud, or radiant fire; it was known and recognized as the Lord Jehovah, (Ezek. ix, 3, 4,) by the prophet, who received his word, acted under his authority, and prophesied in his name. He had, therefore, the most incontestable proof that the Lord had abandoned his sanctuary.

Another communication of great importance was made to the prophet in these visions. He was now informed that individual piety was necessary to the safety and progress, yea, even to the existence of a church. We have abundant evidence in history and in Scripture, that the Hebrews in all ages were prone to attach the utmost importance to a due observance of the ritual law. A careful investigation into the religious condition of the kingdom of Judah, at this period of its history, fully reveals the melancholy fact, that those Hebrews who had not fallen away into idolatry, had, with few exceptions,

become merely formal worshipers, who were fearfully immoral in their character. (*Hebrew People*, p. 384.) The latter of these classes frequently stigmatized the former as apostates from the faith, and the real cause of the repeated judgments and woes under which the nation groaned. But God rejected both. He would neither tolerate the profane rites of idolatry, nor the abominations of sin.

We accordingly find that, when the prophet was made a watchman to the house of Israel, the great evil which he had to denounce was SIN. He was sent to assure the wicked man that he should "surely die," and was held responsible for the faithful communication of this message. Ezek. iii, 18. If the wicked took not warning, he was to "die in his iniquity;" but the prophet had delivered his soul. Verse 19. Again, it was declared, that if the righteous man turned aside to sin, and took not warning, he was to "die in his iniquity." Verses 20, 21.

It was sin, therefore, that was held forth to the mind of this holy prophet as the cause of God's anger, and of the ruin of the Hebrew state. And hence, when judgment was executed, no distinction was made between the avowed idolater and the professed worshiper of Jehovah: only those were saved who sighed and cried for the abominations which were done in the land; those, indeed, whose abhorrence of sin not only saved them from its evils, but led them bitterly to lament its commission by others. So conclusive is the entire scope of these visions against all sin, whether committed by idolaters or professed worshipers of the Lord.

In tracing the communications made to Ezekiel in these visions, we must not overlook the wonderful revelation which they afforded of Divine power. See the son of Buzi on the banks of the Chebar: he is a captive; one of many captives who have all been expatriated from their own land by a foreign and an idolatrous power. They had thought that the God of Israel, who by a series of signal miracles had planted



their fathers in the land of promise, would have defended and protected them there. The power of the proud Babylonian has, however, prevailed; and Ezekiel, and a multitude besides, are captives, strangers in a strange land. More than this, Jerusalem is threatened; it has no strength equal to an effective defense. What, then, is to be the result of all this on the faith of the Hebrews? Is the throne of David, divinely promised to last forever, to be subverted? Are the predicted kingdom and glory of his royal Son to be cut off? Is the hope of Israel to perish? These are questions which must, under the circumstances, have been suggested with fearful effect, and been considered with melancholy interest by the prophet and his companions in captivity. Unsettled in his faith on these vital questions, how could Ezekiel efficiently discharge the important duties of the prophetic office? This case is met by the visions before us in the most complete and comprehensive manner.

Ezekiel, on the banks of the Chebar, saw visions of God. Refer to his magnificent description, (chapter i,) remembering that he was aware the living creatures represented the cherubim of the sanctuary, and knew that he upon the throne was "the God of Israel." Ezekiel x, 20. Let any one then attempt to realize the effect of this appearance on the prophet's mind. Taken in connection with his call and commission, regarded as re-appearing in association with the judgment and condemnation of Jerusalem, does it not give a glorious exhibition of the almighty power which was about to punish his enemies, and sustain the cause of his truth? Observe the burning fire, the lightning, the firmament, and the throne, the noise of the wings of the cherubim, as "the voice of the Almighty God;" (Ezekiel i, 24;) and then consider that even all this did not sufficiently express what was meant to be conveyed; and, therefore, to make out the idea more completely, a new element, the wheels, is introduced in connection with these typical symbols. The vision thus renders palpable to

the mind the gigantic and terrible energy which was now about to characterize the manifestations of the God of Israel. "A spirit of awful and resistless might was now to appear in his dealings; not proceeding, however, by a blind impulse, but, in all its movements, guided by a clear-sighted and unerring sagacity." So that, just as the kingdom of Judah was tottering to its fall, the God of Israel, by these manifestations of his prescience and power, assured his servant of the certain accomplishment of his Divine will.

It would not be difficult to trace the results of these Divine revelations on the ministry of this man of God. Saved from the erroneous notions of his age and class, and led into the secrets of the Divine counsels by these communications, he was prepared to enter into the spirit of his duty with a clear and full apprehension of the great work to which he was called, namely, the reconstruction of a sterling piety among the Hebrew captives; the organization of a godliness and zeal which should issue in the promised restoration of the Hebrew people. "Such, then, was the form and import of this remarkable vision. There was nothing about it accidental or capricious; all was wisely adjusted and arranged, so as to convey beforehand suitable impressions of that work of God to which Ezekiel was now called to devote himself. It was substantially an exhibition, by means of emblematical appearances and actions, of the same views of the Divine character and government which were to be unfolded by the successive communications made by Ezekiel to the Church. By a significant representation, the Lord gathered into one magnificent vision the substance of what was to occupy the prophetic agency of his servant, as in later times was done by our Lord to the evangelist John, in the opening vision of the Apocalypse."—*Fairbairn's Exposition*, p. 34.

Having considered the information thus communicated to the prophet, we have virtually ascertained the bearing of these wonderful revelations on the Hebrew people. What Ezekiel

realized he taught. It is true, they might not be able to apprehend from his description all that he could obtain from personal inspection and intercourse ; but, substantially, all these important elements of information which the prophet acquired would be given, in his discourses and conduct, to the men whom he was Divinely commissioned to teach. For it must not be forgotten, that Ezekiel was not only favored with these visions of God, but his address to his captive brethren, and his narration of all these in the book before us, were given under the immediate and plenary inspiration of the Divine Spirit. It is true, we have in the visions the unmixed operation of the Divine Mind, while in the discourses and narrative of the prophet we see the workings of his own energetic, bold, and lofty spirit, acting with Elias-like zeal in the service of God. Yet, even here, we find an entire submission to Divine direction and control. Like the mighty and terrible wheels of his cherubim, the mind of the prophet was, in all its action, pervaded by the Spirit: whithersoever the Spirit was to go, *he* went ; thither was *his* spirit to go.

By these means the revelations made to Ezekiel in these glorious visions were reflected on the Hebrew captives, until their rich amount of truth and power had, as far as their subjection to the Spirit's teaching would allow, imbued the public mind, and reared up and directed the faith and hope of the people.

III. We have now to consider the revelations made in these visions as affording further information on the symbolical import of the cherubic figures, and as exhibiting a further development of the economy of grace.

The seraphim of Isaiah are described as having wings, hands, and speech, and therefore presented a composite appearance, although no further description is given of their form or likeness. Here, however, we have the compound character of the cherubim clearly declared. For not only had the cherubim of Ezekiel wings, and the hand of a man under their

wings; they also had four faces; for "the likeness of their faces, there was the likeness of a man, and the likeness of a lion, on the right side, to the four of them; and the likeness of an eagle to the four." Ezek. i, 10. This description is rather varied in Ezekiel's account of his second vision: then he says: "And every one had four faces: the first face was the face of a cherub, and the second face was the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle." Ezek. x, 14. From this statement, compared with the former, the "face of a cherub" is identified with "the face of an ox."

As this is the first time in Holy Scripture when this fourfold animal form is ascribed to the cherubim, the question comes fairly and fully before us, What is signified by this strange symbolical representation? We do not hope to set at rest a question of so much importance, embarrassed as it is with unnumbered conflicting opinions. We will, however, endeavor to place in connection the evidence which seems to offer a reasonable solution of this difficulty.

In attempting this it will be necessary to recall attention to the fact, that figures presenting precisely the same animal forms are set before us in the Apocalypse, as representing universal humanity redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. The four "beasts," each having six wings, and resembling a lion, a calf, a man, and a flying eagle, are seen in heaven singing this song of praise to the Lamb, which appeared "as it had been slain" on the heavenly propitiatory: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Rev. iv, 6-8; v, 6-9. Having already referred to this point, it is not necessary to enlarge upon it. But it is important to insist on the reception of this Scriptural testimony. Is it, then, admitted that the four "beasts," or "living creatures," of the Apocalypse, are to be regarded as divinely appointed symbolical represent-

atives of redeemed humanity? Who but human beings could ever say: "Thou hast redeemed us by thy blood?" Who but representatives of the great body of believers, or of humanity, on the subject of redemption, could say: "Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation?" That these representatives were symbolical, is manifest from the presence of these animal forms. The conclusion, therefore, that they represented the great body of the redeemed, or the nature that was the object of redemption, seems undoubted. Here, indeed, we have a rare unanimity among critics, commentators, and divines. Dr. W. Hales, Wesley, Benson, Dr. A. Clarke, G. S. Faber, Dr. Fairbairn, and many others who might be mentioned, all concur in this opinion; namely, that the living creatures of the Apocalypse did, as they said, represent "the redeemed" throughout all nations. We presume, therefore, that we have here firm footing, that this is a tenable position, an undoubted truth.

It was also, we believe, satisfactorily shown in the last discourse, that the living creatures of the Apocalypse were identical with the Old Testament cherubim, and especially with the cherubim of the prophets. We conclude, therefore, that the living creatures now under consideration were intended to symbolize redeemed human nature. This we regard as a clearly ascertained Scriptural truth.

But, then, what are we to understand by the incorporation of parts of a lion, an ox, and an eagle with the human figure? On this very legitimate inquiry I do not venture to speak with so much confidence. A due distinction should ever be maintained between Scriptural truth, and inductions from Scripture, however probable and plausible they may appear. It does seem possible, however, to furnish a very probable solution of the inquiry suggested above, although it may not be capable of direct and positive proof.

It has been already stated, that Dr. Fairbairn has suggested a reason for the use of these animal forms which deserves



attention. He observes, that although the nature of man is "immensely the highest on earth," we "can easily conceive how this very nature of man might be very greatly raised and ennobled, by having superadded to its own inherent qualities those of which the other animal forms here mentioned stand as the appropriate types." This cannot be doubted, and probably this is the key to the difficulty. But should we not endeavor to carry this inquiry somewhat further? Redemption implies recovery or restoration. If, then, these animal forms are found in the cherubim as typical of high and noble qualities, with which our nature is to be invested by the process of redemption, do they not speak of the elevation from which human nature has fallen by sin? Does it not become a question whether human nature, as we now see it, is a just representation *in any respect* of man as he came from the hands of his Maker. If this surmise appears to be startling and far-fetched, let me observe that in one particular we have some information as to the powers of primitive humanity. During the first two thousand years of human existence, such was the constitutional energy of the human frame, that it sustained all the wear and tear of life for about nine hundred years! Is it unreasonable to believe that in other respects, as well as this, man originally possessed a tenfold power over his degenerate descendants of these our days? We know that in respect of the duration of life, man was not brought to his present period of existence by any judicial act of the Almighty taking immediate effect on his system. The duration of human life gradually, but irregularly, declined, until it reached its present term, where it seems to have been stayed by providential interposition. Looking, then, at man as he is, seeing that if the existence of an individual is protracted one hundred years the person is regarded as a prodigy, how can we form an idea of the physical powers which could endure seven, eight, or more than nine times that length of life? If in other respects a similar alteration has taken place on human nature, some

representatives of the highest qualities of animal life of different kinds would be called for in association with the human form, in order to set forth an adequate idea of human nature as it was in its primitive condition, and as it will be when fully redeemed.

It seems, therefore, reasonable to conclude, that the addition of these animal forms was made to the cherubic figures, that they might thus visibly set forth the highest elevation of existence of which humanity is capable, and which it is to realize through the process of redemption; in fact, to prove that all the ruins of the Fall were to be completely removed, and that man, through redemption, was to be raised to the highest point of creaturely existence.

There are other particulars of great interest and importance brought under our consideration in this vision. Between these living cherubim we are told that there was intense fire, and that "it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning." Ezek. i, 13. "And it came to pass, that when he had commanded the man clothed with linen, saying, Take fire from between the wheels, from between the cherubim; then he went in and stood beside the wheels. And one cherub stretched forth his hand from between the cherubim unto the fire that was between the cherubim, and took thereof, and put it into the hands of him that was clothed with linen, who took it and went out." These "coals of fire," we are informed, he was commanded to scatter over the city. Ezek. x, 2, 6, 7.

It will be remembered that an "infolding fire," or "fire of wrath," was manifested in connection with the cherubim at Eden; and also that Ezekiel, in another place, says: "Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God; thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire." Ezek. xxviii, 13, 14.

Such descriptions respecting these typical emblems must be regarded as important and deserving careful attention. What

do these manifestations of fire import? I do not think the solution of this part of the symbolism a difficult task. The fire of wrath which appeared in connection with the Edenic cherubim, certainly indicated God's wrath against sin; a wrath which was only appeased by animal sacrifice. It is a very ancient and prevalent opinion, that God evinced his acceptance of Abel's sacrifice by consuming it with fire. Now, as the place appointed for offering sacrifice in primitive times was "before the Lord," or in the place of "the presence," which was the seat of the cherubim, it seems reasonable to suppose, that when the Divine acceptance of a sacrifice was specially marked, this fire from the cherubim consumed the offering.\*

In Eden those elements were united, which in the Mosaic economy were separated. In Eden the cherubim and the fire were together; in the Hebrew sanctuary the cherubim stood on the propitiatory, but the fire was maintained perpetually on the altar. When, however, the appointed means of propitiation by sacrifice were either neglected or performed without devotion or sincerity, then the cherubim appeared, not as they were intended to be seen—on the blood-sprinkled propitiatory, bathed and crowned in the glory of God's shekinah—but as they were presented to the eye of Ezekiel in these visions. Here the fire of wrath raged between and around the cherubic figures, and shot forth lightnings; thus showing that God now appeared to judge and to punish.

The general accuracy of these views is established by the command given by the Lord to the man clothed with linen, and the action performed by him. Jerusalem was thus, in the most solemn and significant manner, devoted to destruction: it was done by taking burning coals from the fire of wrath between the cherubim, and casting them over the city. This was the prelude to its judgment, the pledge of its approaching conflagration.

This vision also confirms much that has been advanced in

■ This probably led to fire-worship. See my "Gentile Nations," p. 599.

the preceding discourses in other respects. When we read Ezekiel's description of the cherubim glowing in the fire—"And they sparkled like the glitter of polished brass;" "And for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire: and the living creatures ran and returned like the appearance of a meteor-flash," Ezek. i, 7, 13, 14—have we not, in this description, a full and sufficient reason for Isaiah's calling the cherubim which appeared in his vision *seraphim*, "to denote their burning or dazzling appearance, their glorious effulgence?"—*Dr. Henderson*. We see clearly the suitability and appropriateness of the terms applied to the sacred things by which Balaam had access unto God, (Num. xxiv, 1,)—"the appearances in fire."—*Bates's Similitudes*, p. 162. A careful observance of this particular harmonizes almost every Old Testament reference to the cherubim, and gives a correct idea of their appearance, name, and character. Nor must this point be overlooked in the consideration of the typical import of these figures. They not only glowed with burning brightness when placed in contact with the fires of wrath; they were equally radiant when lit up by the glorious shekinah. And thus this feature of cherubic appearance indicates the ultimate destiny of the redeemed. They are to be around the throne and on the throne. If, indeed, *Dr. Henderson* is correct in adopting the conjecture of *Hyde*, (a conjecture which *Gesenius* does not regard as improbable,) the disputed term "cherubim" signifies, "to approach, draw near to," and was given to these figures on account of their immediate proximity to the Divine presence: then the terms, "cherubim" and "seraphim," literally and expressively set forth two crowning privileges of the redeemed. The first indicates their nearness of approach to God; the second, the glorious effulgence which they derive from that proximity to the Author of all-good.

There is, however, a new feature of cherubic character brought before us for the first time in this vision, which is of

the utmost importance, and perhaps ought to be regarded as the culminating point of cherubic symbolism.

In Isaiah's vision we for the first time find cherubic figures endowed with life, and speech, and motion; but then, for anything that appears in the narrative of that occurrence, this might have been a casual departure from the usual character of these typical figures. Here, however, we have cherubim not only endowed with life, and spirit, and motion; but they are called, as with very peculiar emphasis, "living creatures." An exact equivalent to this name was also used by the apostolic writer of the Apocalypse, although it is sadly mis-rendered "beasts" in our authorized version.

Does not this fact call for serious and diligent inquiry? Passing by the brief mention of the Edenic cherubim, we have these types first spoken of in connection with the Hebrew sanctuary, where they are golden figures on the propitiatory. For nearly a thousand years they are known only in this state and condition. Now we have, in divinely appointed visions, the same forms not only represented as full of life, but emphatically named "living creatures." Why is this? What does it import? And what is its bearing on the typical character of the cherubim?

It has been shown that Holy Scripture plainly states, that the living creatures of the Apocalypse represent the great body of the redeemed; and that the living creatures before us are identical with these. Now if these cherubim are types of redeemed humanity, does this ascription of life to them afford any significance to their typical character? We think it does in a most important degree. How is man presented to our view when, fallen from his primitive innocence, he became a subject of redemption? "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Gen. ii, 17. And we consequently find him described as "dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. ii, 1. It was the great object of redemption to remove this death, and all its fearful consequences; and to restore humanity to



life in all its happiness and glory. Hence these typical emblems of our redeemed nature are "living creatures."

But it is not life in the sense of animal existence, that is symbolized by the cherubim. For although man by sin became mortal, man did not when he sinned cease to exist, nor, indeed, lose his animal life. It was that higher and spiritual life, which consisted in a union with God, which man lost by sin, and which he recovers by redemption. And we might even without inquiry presume that it must be this life of which the living cherubim were typical. A brief reference to the teaching of Holy Scripture will confirm this assumption.

When Moses was commanded to place the ark of the covenant with the cherubim in the most holy place of the tabernacle, the Divine promise to him was: "I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee, from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim." For the Lord had said, "Make me a sanctuary, that I may *dwell* among them." But when this dwelling is afterward spoken of, it is expressed in language of a very peculiar kind. It is not said in the Hebrew, that the Lord dwelt between, or above, or before the cherubim, but that he *dwelt*, or *inhabited*, the cherubim. In several places where this form of expression is found in our version, "The Lord of hosts which dwelleth *between* the cherubim," (1 Sam. iv, 4,) there is nothing in the original corresponding to our word *between*, which is consequently found in *italics*. (See also 2 Sam. vi, 2; 2 Kings xix, 15; Isa. xxxvii, 16; Psalm lxxx, 1; xcix, 1.)

This form of expression is peculiarly significant, and indicates that the Divine presence is not to be regarded as separate from and near the cherubim, but as dwelling in or inhabiting them. We have this same truth exhibited in other language in the visions of Ezekiel. This prophet makes repeated reference to the presence and action of the Spirit of God, in language which cannot be mistaken. As, for instance: "The Spirit entered into me, when he spake unto me, and set me

upon my feet." Ezek. ii, 2. "Then the Spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet, and spake with me." Ezek. iii, 24. "Then the Spirit took me up, and I heard." Ezek. iii, 12. "So the Spirit lifted me up, and took me away." Ezek. iii, 14; also xi, 24; viii, 3, etc. In immediate connection with these Scriptures, we are told of these living cherubim, "Whither the Spirit was to go, they went. Whithersoever the Spirit was to go, they went, thither was their Spirit to go." Ezek. i, 12, 20. So that the living creatures and the wheels were not only full of life in every part, but were all directed by one pervading and ruling Spirit, the Spirit of God.

Does not this Divine inhabitation of the cherubim forcibly set forth the crowning glory of redemption? Man, as saved by the great atonement, and delivered from the guilt and power of sin, is not described in the New Testament Scriptures merely as pardoned and renewed, but as the "habitation of God through the Spirit." Eph. ii, 22. When Judas put the important question to the Saviour, "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" the answer was: "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, *and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*" John xiv, 22, 23. Hence we find this fact of an indwelling Spirit the great test of a Christian in the New Testament Scriptures. The apostles preached "Christ in you the hope of glory." Col. i, 27. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" 1 Cor. iii, 17. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." Rom. viii, 9. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Rom. viii, 14. And as if to mark the connection between this gift of the Spirit, and the presence of the glory in the cherubic types of the ancient Church, we are told, "That the Father of glory may give unto you the Spirit." Eph. i, 17. "The riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you the hope of glory." Col. i, 27. And finally,

"For the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you."  
1 Pet. iv, 14.

These views are greatly extended and confirmed by the manner in which the living cherubim of the Apocalypse are spoken of in connection with the application of similar terms to the Divine life and its peculiar manifestations. When John speaks of the cherubim, he calls them ζῶα, or "living ones," and, individually, ζῶον, "a living one," or "living creature." This word must not be supposed to speak of existence or mere animal life, for, although it is sometimes used in this lower sense, it is more generally employed to speak of a higher, more spiritual, and Divine life. Plato and Aristotle both apply the term to God; and the New Testament writers use it in respect of the self-existent and independent life which is inherent alone in the Divine nature. Hence John the evangelist says, "As the Father hath (ζῶην) life in himself, so hath he given the Son to have (ζῶην) life in himself." John v, 26. It is this Divine life which animates the redeemed. To remove all doubt on this subject, we refer to a few other texts in which this term, or that from which it is derived, occurs: "The way which leadeth unto *life*." Matt. vii, 14. "It is better for thee to enter into *life* maimed." Mark ix, 43. "Inherit eternal *life*." Luke x, 25. "In him was *life*, and the *life* was the light of men." John i, 4. "I am the bread of *life*." John vi, 35. "Killed the Prince of *life*." Acts iii, 15. "The law of the Spirit of *life*." Rom. viii, 3. "The savor of *life* unto *life*." 1 Cor. ii, 16. A "*life* which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Tim. i, 1. "Hath eternal *life* abiding in him." 1 John iii, 15.

It is thus that we have brought before us, in the living symbols of both covenants, the indwelling of God in man, as the grand result of redeeming love. As our human nature was mysteriously and permanently united with the Divine in the person of God's Messiah, so believers in Christ are made partakers of the Divine nature by the Spirit of an indwelling God.

And this glorious fact is not only fully affirmed in the New Testament Scriptures, but was constantly symbolized in the ancient Church by the cherubim and its pervading glory.

We have now briefly to consider the prophet's account of these visions, as exhibiting a further development of the economy of grace. And here it may be observed, that this is more than might have been expected at the time. What was the state of religion at this period? and how stood the promise of redemption in the world? Was it upheld by the Church, and acknowledged in the world? The Lord had, indeed, manifested his power on behalf of his people by miracles, and signs, and mighty wonders; unnumbered prophecies had communicated the gracious purposes of God to man; and a glorious series of Divine interpositions had attested the Divine faithfulness: yet, notwithstanding all this, what was the condition of the elect people?

They had become, to a fearful extent, either profane and avowed idolaters, or wicked and formal professors of the true faith. Indeed, so generally had they departed from God, that their preservation as an independent nation became incompatible with the Divine purpose; and at this precise juncture they stood on the brink of national ruin. Great numbers of the people had been carried into captivity; and Jerusalem itself, with the temple, which had been so gloriously filled with the Divine presence, was doomed to hopeless ruin. In those circumstances, how could the Hebrews, even the most pious and faithful among them, still believe that the promised Son of David should sit on the throne of his father, and have an everlasting dominion? When God had forsaken his sanctuary, and given it to ruin, how could it be believed that his covenant was not altogether annulled? When every type of Messiah's kingdom had perished, were the people still to expect the coming of that kingdom? Human reason would reply in the negative to all these inquiries; and doubtless despair of the accomplishment of the Divine purpose operated as fatally, if

not as extensively, among the timid and fearful of the Hebrews, as idolatry and wickedness did among the formal and presumptuous.

But the ways of God are not as our ways. When man would have thought it scarcely possible to sustain the cause of revealed truth in the world, on account of the apostasy of the elect people, the Lord found means not only to maintain, but greatly to extend it. At this season of almost universal religious declension, when the best of the Hebrews, who were saved from destruction and carried into captivity, are spoken of as "scorpions," "impudent and stiff-hearted," "a rebellious house," "most rebellious," (Ezek. ii, 4, 6, 7, 8,) then the Lord not only communicated to the people, through the prophet, the great and glorious revelations on which we have previously remarked, but added thereto the most important elements of "the likeness of a man on the throne, and a rainbow round the throne."

Could a Hebrew possibly misapprehend the meaning of this? The promise of redemption, from the beginning, pointed out the Seed of the woman as the Saviour. Every added type and prophecy more distinctly referred to this great fact. And now, when the temple is abandoned to ruin—a ruin merited by the apostasy of the people—not only is the glory from the cherubim, the shekinah of God, removed on the wings of living cherubim; but on the throne, over these, is seen the likeness of a man encompassed by a rainbow. The appearance of a man on the throne was adapted to shed a flood of light on the whole process of redemption. It assumed the certainty of the incarnation, the sufficiency of the Saviour's atonement, and his consequent exaltation and reign. When faith languished, and man despaired, God revealed the accomplishment of his purpose, the certain success of his redeeming plan.

It is true, the rainbow indicated that the accomplishment of the Divine purpose was yet future; but its presence showed with equal plainness that it was certain. This sign was ■



token of the covenant, a pledge of the unfailing fidelity of God to his promise. When, therefore, the earthly throne of David was being subverted, and the glory of Judah was perishing, the Lord, by this vision, raised the thoughts and hopes of his people to a heavenly throne, and a spiritual and everlasting kingdom, as the great subject of prophecy and promise.

We do not pretend to say what impression these remarkable revelations made on the minds of the Hebrew captives. Ezekiel, indeed, has not told us what effect they produced on his own mind. But it cannot be difficult to form a judgment on the case. Here was the Hebrew nation on the brink of destruction, religiously and politically ruined, and, to all human appearance, involving the hope of man's redemption and the religion of the world in their fall. At this crisis, Ezekiel is raised up; has special and direct intercourse with God; and is favored with revelations of the most remarkable kind. These present to his mind no really new elements of faith, but they revive the oldest and most sacred types and symbols of that dispensation; and show these invested with a life, vigor, and energy, never seen before. Who can contemplate the narrative of these visions without being deeply impressed with this fact? Men said, "God has forsaken the earth;" "The Lord does not see;" when the God of Israel is seen on the banks of the Chebar, in converse with a holy Hebrew, and is heard declaring to him the purpose of his will. Some supposed that the sacred things of the sanctuary were curious antiques, which were now obsolete in religion, and superseded by the more gaudy and glaring symbols of heathen worship; when Jehovah brings them forth in the light of day, and associates them with his presence and his throne. Many believed that the holy sanctuary and sacred things were a pledge of Divine protection, a palladium of security for the city of Jerusalem and the throne of Judah; and this irrespective of the religion or morals of the people. To correct this fatal error, the cherubim appear, full of life and energy, imbued with the Spirit of God,

and connected with his throne; when a strict investigation is made into the moral and religious character of every individual in the city, and every one is saved, or doomed to an instant and a terrible death, as he may have heartily and spiritually lived to God, and regarded his honor and his law, or have slighted, neglected, or disobeyed his commands. It is not unreasonable to suppose, considering the polytheistic views which then obtained, that others really thought that the power of the God of Israel was exhausted. That he had wrought mighty wonders in behalf of his people, was patent to the world; but now it seemed as though he could no longer save them from their impending fate. These visions rebuked this impious surmise with a revelation of almighty power. When did the Lord of hosts appear accompanied with a display of more terrible energy? The living creatures, the wheels full of eyes, the fire, the throne, all guided by the prescient and Almighty Spirit, clearly proved that the Jehovah of Israel was the Almighty God, the Lord of the whole earth.

In any and every point of view, these marvellous revelations met the wants of the times, and sustained the cause of revealed truth. They reared up a mighty protest against prevailing error; manifested the almighty power of God, as displayed in support of his truth; and more clearly identified the incarnate Redeemer with the throne of his glory, than had ever been done previously. The visions of Ezekiel, therefore, form a remarkable epoch in the history of the Church, and in the development of the economy of grace to the world.

## DISCOURSE VII.

## THE SON OF GOD IN THE FIERY FURNACE.

Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.—DANIEL iii, 25.

THE subject of this chapter does not seem to have any direct connection with the historical matter which precedes, or which follows it. There is, however, no reason for doubting that it occupies its proper chronological position in the historical part of Daniel's Book. Yet, unconnected as it seems, and standing quite alone, it is a most important portion of holy writ. It narrates, with graphic power and singular minuteness, a most extraordinary proceeding of the proud King of Babylon. It brings out with striking effect the civil and religious policy of the Babylonian government under Nebuchadnezzar, shows the devoted heroism of three pious young Hebrews, the fury of the enraged tyrant, the miraculous salvation of these martyrs, and the entire defeat of the king's purpose.

In order to our comprehending the important truths comprised in this subject, and their bearing on the great economy of grace, it will be necessary for us carefully to consider:

I. The state of the world at this period, in regard to the promise of redemption.

II. The object of the king in this extraordinary convocation, and in enforcing the worship of his golden image.

III. The miraculous deliverance of the three Hebrews by the personal interposition of the Son of God; and the effect produced by this miracle on the faith of the Hebrews, and of the Gentile nations.

I. We have to consider the state of the world at this period, in respect of the promise of redemption.

However prone men of the world, even the wise and powerful among them, may be to ignore religious truth, and to take little account of the promises and privileges of God's redeeming mercy, one fact is patent throughout all the ages of antiquity; namely, that the promise of man's redemption, through a suffering but triumphant Saviour, has always been the ruling element, not only in the religions, but also in the history of the world.

We can feel no surprise that this was the case with the Hebrews. Their national existence, as well as their national religion, arose out of the great scheme of redemption. The call of Abraham to leave his family and kindred, and wander in a strange land, was followed by the promise made to him: "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: . . . and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Gen. xii, 2, 3. Accordingly, we find that in every future development of Hebrew history, there was a manifest reference to the coming of Him, in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed.

The covenant relation established in these and other similar promises was inherited by Isaac, (Gen. xvii, 21,) then transmitted to Jacob, (xxviii, 13, 14,) afterward confirmed to Judah, (xlix, 10,) and ultimately conferred on David. (2 Sam. vii, 1-16; Isaiah xi, 1-10; Jer. xxiii, 5.) In all these cases, it will be observed, the prediction announced the possession of sovereign power and regal dignity, in immediate connection with the promised coming of the great Redeemer. It was consequently a settled article of Hebrew faith that Messiah would raise his people to independence and power, as well as communicate to them all the promised blessings of redemption. And these hopes had been encouraged by so many splendid predictions, and had been sustained by so many miracles and so much Divine interposition, that we cannot wonder at their fully pervading the Hebrew people, and more or less

producing an impression on the inhabitants of the surrounding countries.

Yet, at the time to which this portion of Scripture refers, these hopes had received a very severe check. Jerusalem had been destroyed, the throne of David was overthrown, and his lineal descendant languished in a dungeon in Babylon. The temple had been burned, all its sacred things carried off or destroyed by the heathen; and the whole Hebrew people existed as fugitives in other lands, or as captives in Babylonia. Nothing of Hebrew polity or power remained. Every visible type of the predicted kingdom of Messiah had perished. All, indeed, that the manifold interpositions of God had done to prepare a foundation for the accomplishment of his great redeeming purpose, seemed to have been again undone, by the inveterate sins of the people whom he had elected as his own.

It is true the word of God remained. The numerous prophetic declarations respecting the person, the appearance, the work, and the kingdom of Messiah still continued in the sacred volume as the undoubted revelations of the great Jehovah; and there still remained among the seed of Israel those who, notwithstanding the pressure of defeat, disgrace, and disaster, clung with a steady faith to the word of promise, and still dared to believe, and to expect the accomplishment of the Divine purpose in the world's redemption.

But what, at this season, was the condition of the Gentile world with regard to the promise of a Saviour? This is a most important question, and one which our limits will not allow us fully to discuss. Yet it is a question so involved in the subject before us as to necessitate a brief inquiry.

It is certain that the promise made to our first parents was by them fully communicated to their offspring. Abel, Enoch, and Noah exercised a saving faith in God; and this undoubtedly implies, that they had received a revelation of Divine truth, a word of promise; for "faith cometh by hearing, and



hearing by the word of God." Rom. x, 17. Nor was the knowledge of this revealed truth destroyed by the deluge ; it survived the wreck of the antediluvians, was freely disseminated among the rising population of the new world, and exercised a mighty influence over their views, opinions, and course of action.

It is not an easy task to condense the evidence which has been collected on this subject, so as to make it intelligible in a section of such a discourse as the present. Although the faith of Abraham has always been proverbial, we know no reason to believe that he possessed any more knowledge respecting the scheme of redemption, than all his cotemporaries had the means of obtaining, until after he had begun to sojourn in Canaan. It has been argued, and apparently with success, that the assumption of Nimrod was religious as much as political, and that it was based on the promise of a Redeemer, who was expected to exercise universal sovereignty ; which promise, the proud rebel declared, was accomplished in himself. (See *Patriarchal Age*, pp. 330-333.)

A recognition of these facts prepares us for prosecuting an investigation into the state of feeling, faith, and expectation prevalent among the ancient Gentile nations in respect of the promise of a Redeemer, or the coming of a mighty and universal Prince.

Suetonius, in his *Life of Vespasian*, which was probably written about the end of the first, or in the beginning of the second century after Christ, asserts that " throughout the whole East an ancient and constant opinion had familiarly prevailed, that they who proceeded from Judea were fated to obtain the sovereignty of the world." This is a remarkable saying, and, coming to us from a writer of such general information and undoubted veracity, is calculated to produce a considerable impression on the mind.

But this expectation, so prevalent in the East, did not refer exclusively to the reign of a powerful sovereign. Confucius,

who wrote about 550 B. C., used to observe that "the Holy One must be sought in the West." So that the opinion that a great prophet, or teacher, would arise in Western Asia, seems to have been as prevalent as the expectation of a great ruling sovereign.

The journey of the magi to Judea in the days of Herod is probably a proof of the continuance of both these opinions in the East, even to the time of Christ. For, as Mr. Faber very conclusively argues, the appearance of a star or meteor could not of itself have induced this journey of theirs. Taking their statement without reference to any prevailing opinion or impression such as we have referred to, "there is no intelligible or perceptible connection between the premises and their conclusion. . . . They must, therefore, have had some antecedent ground for their inference; and the only ground for such an inference can be, that, from whatever source, they were already in expectation of some wonderful Jewish monarch, who should also be a universal sovereign, and with whose manifestation a star would be remarkably connected."—*Eight Dispensations*, vol. ii, pp. 94, 95.

We find, therefore, that the promise of a Redeemer was widely diffused from the original seat of the postdiluvian race among the primitive nations; that it extended so far as China, and continued prevalent until the time of Christ; and that a learned and credible Roman author says, that this opinion anciently and constantly prevailed in the East. Can we, then, by investigating the historical and religious antiquities of the ancient empires, learn anything further of the existence of this expectation, or of the character which it assumed?

If we pursue this inquiry in the case of ancient Egypt, we obtain information equally singular and important. The expectation of a Divine Son had not been lost on the first settlers in this country, or on their descendants. The primitive promise of redemption, on the contrary, appears to have been the ruling element of the theology of ancient Egypt. Their triad

of divinities was accordingly *Moat*, "the Great Mother;" *Amour*, "the Great Father;" and *Chons*, "the promised Infant Son." Afterward this ascription of divinity was transferred to the patriarch whose tribe colonized Egypt; and he was worshiped as Osiris, "the Father;" his wife, as Isis, "the Mother;" and "the promised Son," as Horus. So very prevalent was this recognition of the original promise, that connected with every temple there was a small room or chapel erected, entered from the *adytum*, or most sacred part of the sanctuary, which was called *MA-EM-MISI*, or "the birth-place;" and here the promised Son was expected to appear.

But as the ruling sovereign regarded himself as lineally descended from this patriarch, he also considered himself to be the living representative of the Deity; and, accordingly, when he had the triad of divinities sculptured on the walls of a new temple, it was not unfrequent for Osiris to be represented in the likeness of the king, Isis in that of his wife, and Horus, as their first-born son. The likeness of the latter would also frequently adorn the "birth-place."

Thus royalty was placed before the public, in ancient Egypt, as immediately associated with divinity, and especially with the appearance of the promised Divine Son. "The birth of this great and all-powerful being, his manifestation as an infant, his nurture through the succeeding periods of childhood and of boyhood, constituted the grand mystery of the entire system; and, more extraordinary than all, he also undergoes a succession of births, through a descending series of emanations, which, harmonizing perfectly with the doctrine of the metempsychosis, so well known to be peculiar to the Egyptian priesthood, conveys, by a metaphor not to be mistaken, their persuasion that this same august being would at some time become incarnate, and be born upon earth as an infant."—*Antiquities of Egypt*, p. 145.

Advantage was once taken of this element of the national faith, to invest a living king with the claims of actual divin-

ity, that, as such, he might obtain the entire subjection of the whole country to his power, or to one faith. For, in this remote period of Egyptian history, it does not precisely appear what was the exact object of a long and bloody civil war, which was begun by the King Mencheres. Whether many of the cities of the country refused to acknowledge his authority, or whether he was intent on establishing a uniformity of religion, can now scarcely be ascertained from the mass of fable in which these accounts are at present involved. But we are assured that the means which this king adopted for the accomplishment of his purpose are undoubted. "Mencheres made a god of himself during his own lifetime. He took into himself the divine nature of the hawk, as the sacred bird of the sun; and, wearing a mask representing the head of a hawk, he was borne in procession, worshiped, and solemnly inaugurated in a shrine in his own new temple of Osiris at Abydos, as a new god in the mythology of 'Horus, the son of Isis and Osiris, the avenger of his father.' The ceremonial took place at night; and thenceforward that night was marked in the *fasti* of Egypt for especial and solemn observance, as 'the night of the birth of Horus at Abydos.'"—*Osburn's Monumental History of Egypt*, pp. 322–348.

So that we find in the earliest ages of Egyptian history, the expectation of the birth of the promised divine son was so prevalent and powerful, that this king, for the accomplishment of some great ambitious purpose, was able to get himself recognized as an impersonation of this divine being; and actually did issue from the *adytum* of the sanctuary with all the emblems of deity, as the god Horus. By these means he was esteemed among his people as one of the most venerated divinities, although no new mythic interest was created, no new deity added to the Pantheon. Mencheres was, in fact, received as the son of Isis and Osiris, the promised and expected deity.

If we now direct our attention to the religion of ancient

Assyria, we find traditions, usages, and doctrines scarcely less remarkable than those which obtained in Egypt. It has been already observed that there are reasons for believing that the proud and ambitious rebellion of Nimrod was connected with some profane assumption of claims to divinity. If this were so, we might naturally expect to find some vestiges of similar conduct or character in the religion and royal policy of ancient Assyria, the kingdom of which he was the founder.

Of all the numerous compound figures which so extensively abound in the sculptures that have been recently disinterred, belonging to this ancient empire, the most remarkable is that which represents the figure of a man with the wings and tail of a bird, inclosed in a circle. Mr. Layard observes of this symbol: "We may conclude, from the prominent position given to this figure in the Nimroud sculptures, and from its occurrence on Persian monuments as the representation of Ormuzd, that it was also a type of the supreme deity among the Assyrians. It will require a more thorough knowledge of the contents of the inscriptions than we at present possess, to determine the name by which this divinity was known. It may be conjectured, however, that it was BAAL, or some modification of a name which was that of the great god among nearly all nations speaking the cognate dialects of Semitic or Syro-Arabian language. According to M. Lajard, this symbol is formed of a circle or crown, to denote time without bounds, or eternity; encircling the image of Baal with the wings and tail of a dove, to show the association of Mylitta, the Assyrian Venus; thus presenting A COMPLETE TRIAD."—*Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. ii, p. 449.

We have here, certainly, the key to this recondite symbol. Nothing is more certain than that the great Father was, from the introduction of idolatry, worshiped as Cronos, or Saturn, or Time, in all its wide and boundless range of duration. Then we have Mylitta, or perhaps, rather, Derceto, "the mother of the gods," according to this system, and eminently the great



mother, who in her youth was fabled to have been sustained by doves a whole year,\* and after her death to have been changed into a dove; and who, under this form, was universally worshiped in Assyria. Thirdly, Baal is presented as the son, the great god descending from the great father and mother, and with them forming the Assyrian triad.

Layard's further discoveries have confirmed the accuracy of this exposition. In the rubbish at the foot of one of the gigantic human-headed bulls in the grand entrance to the palace of Khorsabad, were found four engraved cylinders. On one of these, made of green feldspar, "which," says the learned explorer, "I believe to have been the signet or amulet of Sennacherib himself, is engraved the king standing in an arched frame, as on the rock tablets at Bairan, and at the Nahr-el-Kelb in Syria: he holds in one hand the sacrificial mace, and raises the other in the act of adoration before the winged figure in a circle, here represented as a triad with three heads. This mode of portraying the emblem is very rare on Assyrian relics, and is highly interesting, as confirming the conjecture that the mythic human figure, with the wings and tail of a bird, inclosed in a circle, was the symbol of the triune god, the supreme deity of the Assyrians."—*Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 160.

We regard this conclusion of Mr. Layard as indisputable. Here the human form, the circle, and the wings, accompanied by the human heads, appear to mark out unmistakably the representation of three divine persons in close and intimate union; and that is, from our preceding inquiries, shown to be that of father, mother, and son. This symbol, therefore, again presents to our view a striking representation of the primitive promise; nor must the significant circumstance be overlooked, that, however the father and mother may be symbolized, the son is always in human form.

It is an important element in respect of this triadic symbol,

\* Probably in allusion to the year spent in the ark, and to Noah's dove.

that it always occupied a peculiar relation to royalty. When the king appears, the triadic figure is shown over his head, and the human form in the circle, or the divine son, is always represented in precisely the same attitude as the king below: so that Layard does not scruple to say that the king "himself was supposed to be invested with divine attributes, or was looked upon as a type of the supreme deity."—*Nineveh*, vol. ii, p. 267.

From all this it seems highly probable, if not certain, that sovereigns of Assyria regarded themselves, and were placed before their people, as in some sense the representatives on earth of the promised divine son. As Assyria immediately preceded the kingdom of Babylon, we will next turn our attention to the religion of ancient Persia, which empire directly followed Babylon in its career of conquest and government. Here our investigation may be very brief; for, as our inquiry only respects one particular element of faith, the opinions and exceptions which obtained in respect of the promise of redemption, and that especially as connected with the person of the king, our object is nearly attained when we state that "it is an undoubted fact that the religion of Persia was reared on precisely the same foundation as that of Assyria." (See *Gentile Nations*, p. 296.)

This was more especially the case in respect of the particular under consideration. The triadic figure with the circle, wings, and human form, is found nowhere more frequently, or in greater perfection, than in Persia; and what is remarkable, the countenance of the divine son in this triadic figure is always a likeness of the king. It is further a notorious fact, that these kings claimed to be divine, and insisted on an act of worship being performed by all who approached them. The Persians gloried in this. Hence we find Artabanus, in his conference with Themistocles, observing: "Among those many excellent laws of ours, the most excellent is this, *that the king is to be honored and worshiped religiously*, as the image

of that God which conserveth all things.”—*Universal History*, vol. iv, p. 77. The real worship of the sovereign was therefore a public duty, of universal obligation: none durst appear before him without prostrating themselves on the ground; nay, they were all obliged, at what distance soever the king appeared, to pay him that adoration. “And this was exacted as rigorously from foreign ambassadors and ministers as from native Persians, as he would only speak with such as were willing to adore him.”—*Ibid.*

We now turn our attention to Babylon. If such fearful perversions of the primitive promise obtained to the east and the west of this kingdom, and influenced the neighboring nations, immediately before and after the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, what were the opinions entertained by him and his people during the period of his government? This is a question vitally affecting the subject before us, and one which it is not difficult to answer.

“The Babylonians,” we are told, “like the rest of the barbarians, pass over in silence the one principle of the universe; and they constitute two, Tauthe and Apason; making Apason the husband of Tauthe, and denominating her the ‘Mother of the gods;’” and from these proceeds “AN ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON, Moymis.”—*Theogonies from Damascius.*

Here, too, it is evident we have the primitive promise preserved and perverted. The one principle of the universe, the ONE TRUE GOD, is not denied, but passed over; and deity is ascribed to the Great Father, the Great Mother, and an only-begotten Son. This Son, it must be observed, was not merely to be a ruling, reigning, Divine Son. He was to be a Son without an equal, a peerless, only-begotten Son.

It is not necessary for us here to proceed further in this inquiry. We have found in all ancient powerful kingdoms—Egypt, Assyria, Persia, Babylon—that the promise of a Divine Son had been remembered; that he had been regarded as kingly and Divine, and was, as such, generally desired and

expected ; and, for that reason, the king almost always claimed some relation, representative or otherwise, to the promised Son ; and in one instance, at least, a king actually put himself forward as an incarnation of this divinity.

Such was the state of the world in respect of the subject in question before and immediately after the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. Further light is cast on this subject by the conduct of Alexander the Macedonian. Between two and three centuries after Nebuchadnezzar, when the Grecian conqueror had subdued Asia Minor, Palestine, and Egypt, and had made every preparation for carrying the war into the heart of Persia, he deferred his purpose, consumed much valuable time, and periled his own life and the lives of his best troops, in a journey to the deserts of Ethiopia, where Cambyses had lost an army of fifty thousand men. What could have been the object of this great warrior in so strange a journey ? It was to visit the temple of Jupiter Ammon, not merely to consult the oracle, but to be adopted or recognized as the son of that deity. That such was the object of the king, is unquestionable, (see *Appendix*, note 18 ;) and his taking such a perilous journey for such a purpose is the best possible proof that such was the state of public opinion and feeling among the nations of Asia especially, that no one could hope to attain universal dominion unless he did so in the character of a recognized son of the supreme god. This justified the conduct of Alexander. His journey and profane assumption of Divinity were not the result of a foolish personal ambition, but means which he judged necessary to the attainment of the great object which absorbed his whole soul—universal empire.

The foregoing statement of the opinions and expectations of the ancient world prepare us for considering :

II. The object of the king in this extraordinary convocation, and in enforcing the worship of his golden image.

In entering upon this inquiry it will be necessary, in the first place, to observe, that, taking the common view of the

narrative, namely, that the golden image was merely another idol added to the many objects worshiped in the pantheon of Babylon, the account is in every respect the most extraordinary that can be conceived.

1. It is remarkable that so much importance should have been given to such a circumstance as the inauguration of an image, however costly. Why should such pomp and parade be attached to an occurrence which must have taken place very frequently in a heathen nation?

2. The manner in which this importance was given on the present occasion is equally striking. This was a newly formed empire; some of its countries were but very recently conquered; the abstraction of all the principal officers of state from their seats of government must have occasioned great inconvenience, and some danger to the peace and stability of the state. Yet we are told the requirement was universal; "the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces" were gathered together. Now, although it may not be easy to define the precise offices thus set forth, there can be no doubt that the whole comprised the *élite* of the government of the empire, and their simultaneous absence from their posts of duty must have been perilous.

3. This measure must have occupied much time, and occasioned considerable trouble and expense. The kingdom extended from the borders of Cyrene to the remote East. Yet from this vast extent of territory all these officers were convened on the plains of Dura in the province of Babylon.

4. Why was opposition to the decree of the king regarded as so likely, that death was denounced as the punishment of disobedience, and a fiery furnace prepared, and heated burning hot, in order to put the threatened punishment in force in the most summary and terrible manner? It is true that intolerance was always prominent in the political and religious policy of Assyria and Babylon. But this was by no means common



among other ancient heathen nations. There was no general indisposition evinced by them usually to worship the gods of another people; they did so frequently and without reluctance. Why, then, on this occasion, should it have been so confidently assumed that men would dare death rather than worship the image? Some have supposed that Nebuchadnezzar had an eye to the Hebrews, and counted on their resistance. But it could not have been unknown to the king, that with this people idolatry had been common; and he might surely have thought that those whose passion for this sin had reduced them to ruin, would not refuse, in obedience to his authority, to worship a golden image on this particular occasion.

5. Again, what are we to understand by the remarkable language of the king: "The form of the fourth is like the Son of God?" We are aware that objections have been made to the translation of this clause in the authorized version; but, without contending for mere modes of expression, it cannot be denied that the king speaks of the form of a Divine Son, and thus the question is maintained in its full force.

6. Lastly, assuming that this was a manifestation of the Son of God, what was there to call forth such a remarkable interposition, regarding the object of the meeting as the worship of a mere image of gold?

These and other objections to the common notion of this occurrence instinctively rise in the mind, and oblige us to inquire very carefully whether there is any other exposition of the case which relieves the Scriptural narration from such difficulties, and harmonizes it and its Divine interposition with other portions of Scripture, and with the great economy of grace.

It should be remembered, that Nebuchadnezzar at this time had established his authority in the East, and returned from his conquest in the West, having subdued all opposition, and reared up an unrivaled and universal dominion. (Dan. ii, 37, 38.) Let it, then, be supposed that in these circumstances he

desired, and was determined to secure, that which, as we have seen, was in all ancient times regarded as essential to the claim to universal dominion—identity with the promised Divine Son, the *Moymis* of his national theology, or, which is more likely, the *Baal*, that being a more prevalent designation for the same Divine person. If this was the case, if Nebuchadnezzar had this image made to represent himself, and insisted on its being worshiped as Baal, the promised and expected Divine Son, then all the difficulties of the case are removed, and the whole narrative becomes full of significance and importance.

The rapid and extensive conquests of this sovereign, acting on a mind so insatiably ambitious, were very likely to lead him to such a step; and the language in which he had been addressed by the prophet Daniel (ii, 37, 38) was not unlikely to confirm him in his profane purpose.

One thing is certain: our solution removes all difficulty from the case. If Nebuchadnezzar, on this occasion and by these means, aimed at being recognized as the promised Divine Son, the universal king of mankind, then we see a sufficient reason for this large assemblage; then, as such a recognition would greatly tend to the consolidation of his power and the stability of his throne, it would be worth the risk, cost, and inconvenience which such a meeting occasioned. In this case we can see a reason for apprehending an opposition to the king's will; for, as almost every ancient nation had traditions of the primitive promise, and expectations of its fulfillment in their own country, it was not unlikely that some one might refuse obedience. On this supposition, too, we see a sufficient reason for the king's anxiety to obtain a universal compliance with his will, inasmuch as such an act of adoration as was required would, in that case, have been a most solemn act of political fealty, an undoubted recognition of the right of the sovereign to unlimited obedience, as the religious and political ruler of the world.

But it may be said, this notion is mere conjecture, and unsupported by any direct evidence whatever. The truth of this objection must not be too hastily conceded. There is evidence which bears directly on the case, and evidence of the most important character, because it is found in Holy Scripture.

In the first place, then, we say that Nebuchadnezzar acted precisely in the character we suppose him to have assumed. In the case before us, he not only exercises dominion as a king, but prescribes the object and manner of worship as if he had been a god. And this profane assumption did not cease when he had been so strangely rebuked by the Divine appearance in the fire: even then he could not issue a command to respect and honor the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, without adding, that all who disobeyed it should "be cut in pieces, and their houses be made a dunghill." Dan. iii, 29. And afterward, what was the cause of the seven years' insanity with which the king was judicially afflicted by the immediate act of God? It certainly was because he arrogated to himself powers and a glory which alone belonged to God. It was when he said, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" that the kingdom departed from him, and he was driven to herd with the beasts. This infliction, we are told, was intended simply to correct the very assumption we impute to him, and to lead him to acknowledge the existence and government of God: "Till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men." And when he was brought to an acknowledgment of this great truth, he was restored. Dan. iv, 25, 34, 35.

If no further evidence could be given in favor of this opinion, we think what has been advanced would, when fairly considered, fully justify its adoption, and be sufficient to remove all doubt from the case. This, however, is not all the evidence which the Scripture does afford on the subject. We can adduce positive scriptural proof that Nebuchadnezzar did per-

sonally assume divinity, and claim to be the very Divine person who has been referred to. This positive Scripture proof is found in the language of prophecy ; but the terms in which it is conveyed are so clear, that it must be conclusive with every sincere believer in revelation.

The fourteenth chapter of the book of Isaiah contains a series of magnificent prophecies respecting Babylon and its king. The greater part of it (verses 4-21) refers to Nebuchadnezzar. It is spoken "against the King of Babylon," (who was a great conqueror,) "who smote the people with a continual stroke, that ruled the nations in anger." Verses 4, 6. There was but one King of Babylon to whom such language could apply. Nebuchadnezzar alone must have been intended ; the passage has, indeed, been always applied to him, and is not capable of being referred to any other. Well, then, of Nebuchadnezzar the prophet says: "Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God : I will sit also on the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north : I will ascend above the heights of the clouds ; I will be like the Most High." Verses 13, 14. We must ascertain the precise import of this remarkable language. It asserts, that the King of Babylon would arrogate to himself Divine titles and powers ; that he would do this in a manner unlike the ordinary hero-deities of the heathen : "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God ; I will be like the Most High." The character of this profane assumption is defined with remarkable precision : "I will sit upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north." The Rev. G. S. Faber, the highest English authority on such a question, observes on these words : "The sentiments here placed in the mouth of this arrogant tyrant seem evidently to refer to that apotheosis of sovereign princes which prevailed so extensively among the Gentiles ; and the specific idea which is meant to be conveyed I take to be this : that the Babylonian monarch, not content even with the impiety of an ordinary deification, claimed,

in the pride of his high speculations, the loftiest seat of the holy northern mount, that hill of the congregation, or synod of the demon-gods." What, then, are we to understand by this "holy northern mount," to which the prophet so pointedly alludes? The same learned author explains: "We may safely, I believe, answer, the garden of Paradise, which was situated in the northern mountains of Ararat."—*Origin of Pagan Idolatry*, vol. i, pp. 349, 350. The loss of Paradise called forth the promise of a Saviour, and its recovery has always been regarded as the great crowning work of the DIVINE SON. Here, then, we have it distinctly asserted, that Nebuchadnezzar would claim to be Divine, and in the precise manner in which all the evidence bearing on the case proves he did assume it. If any doubt remains, we may ask, Was this plain and explicit prophecy of Isaiah ever fulfilled? And if so, when was it, or could it have been fulfilled but by the person and in the manner which has been pointed out?

We assume it, therefore, as a clearly established fact, that Nebuchadnezzar, having completed his conquests, possessing unrivaled power, claimed to be received as universal sovereign, and as an incarnation of the promised Divine Son; that he did in Babylon what Mencheres had done long before in Egypt, and what was virtually done afterward by Alexander the Great. This being taken as a key to the account before us, all its difficulty is removed; and we regard the golden image as a likeness of the king, and its worship enjoined as a recognition of the divinity of the sovereign in this character. There are weighty historical authorities for such a conclusion, quite apart from the evidence which has led us to adopt it.

When Xerxes destroyed the temple of Belus or Baal at Babylon, he is said to have found there a statue of gold forty feet high, which has been supposed to have been the identical statue provided by Nebuchadnezzar; and this was called an image of Baal or Bel. From the Book of Judith we know that some of the Assyrian kings were worshiped as gods. Jerome,



who, from the age in which he lived, and his intercourse with the East, must have had the best possible means of obtaining information, believed that the golden image was a statue of Nebuchadnezzar. And the author of the "Paschal Chronicle" affirms that Nebuchadnezzar's golden statue "was an image of himself." We hope, then, that we have satisfactorily shown the object of the king in this matter, and his end in enforcing the worship of his golden image.

III. We have, then, in the third place, to consider the miraculous deliverance of the three Hebrews by the personal interposition of the Son of God; and the effect produced by the miracle on the faith of the Hebrews and of the Gentile nations.

Let us endeavor to realize the scene before us. Here is the proud king who, having established his sovereign sway over numerous nations, disdains to be man—aspire to be God. For the purpose of securing a formal recognition of his divine character, he has an image of himself made in gold; and this image, erected on a lofty pedestal in the plain of Dura, is to be worshiped as the god Baal, the promised Son. All the great officers of his empire are collected from all parts; a numerous band of musicians is provided; the fiery furnace is prepared to inflict instant destruction on any who may resist the king's will; the proclamation is at hand; all, indeed, is ready for insulting the reason of man, outraging the majesty of God, and inflicting a blow, as deadly as the power of earth could inflict, on the faith and hope of those who still expected the appearance of a Divine Redeemer. The proclamation is made, the music sounds, the multitude fall prostrate in adoration round the image. Is the object secured? Has the profane purpose been effected? No! Three Hebrews stand erect amid the prostrate crowd. Their conduct sullies the whole act of worship; they are impeached, arraigned, and are found inflexible; they will not bow to the image of the ambitious monarch. The fury of the king knows no bounds; the fiery furnace is made

seven times hotter; the three Hebrews are bound and cast into the fire; so intense is the heat, that the mighty men who are employed as executioners are destroyed by approaching near enough to the furnace to cast the martyrs into the flames.

What mighty religious interests trembled in the balances at that moment! Are these witnesses for the truth to perish? Are the persons composing this multitude of the aristocracy of the world, to return to their several localities filled with the conviction that the promise of an incarnate divinity was fulfilled in Nebuchadnezzar, and that all who doubted were destroyed? A tumult raged in the mind of the king; anxiety must have excited the multitude. But what was going on in the fiery furnace? The piercing eye of Nebuchadnezzar watched the place intended by him for the destruction of his victims, with intense concern. At length all his doubt is removed. In profound amazement he asks, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" His officers replied, "True, O king." He answered and said, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God!"

Nebuchadnezzar was perfectly familiar with the manner in which the Divine Son was represented in the sculptures of his own (see *Appendix*, note 19) and the neighboring nations; and we think there can be no doubt that the Son of God appeared on this occasion with some known sign or emblem, or in such a manner as to reveal at once his person and character to the disappointed monarch. The intended martyrs are called forth; they appear perfectly unharmed: the sequel respecting them is well known; they and their religion are honored and applauded, and great reverence is proclaimed to be due to their God, who alone could save in this manner. Thus truth and right triumph over arrogance, pride, and power: but what are the results of this miraculous deliverance to the faith and hope of mankind, to the religious interests of the world?

This question we have now to consider, and it is one of very serious and extensive consequence. We can scarcely find, in the whole range of ancient history, any congregation or assembly equal in number, intelligence, energy, and influence, to that convened on this occasion. Never was a question of deeper or more universal interest and importance brought before any body of people than that which was propounded to them. And surely never was a conclusion, or solution, impressed on the mind and memory of all present in a more thrilling and effective manner than was the case here. What, then, were the impressions and convictions communicated to the assembly by the events which they witnessed?

1. They had a splendid exhibition of noble-minded fidelity to God. There were many in that company who would cheerfully hazard their lives in the service of their king; but were any prepared to die rather than dishonor their God? This is more than doubtful, and, consequently, the noble devotion of these three young men must have made an impression on the spectators.

2. There was here more than a noble spirit of self-sacrifice; there was a public and powerful manifestation of real spiritual religion, such as cannot possibly arise from any false system. Their calm demeanor: "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter;" their strong faith: "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king;" their inflexible determination: "But if not, we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image;" all this must have exhibited the religion of the Hebrews to the assembled multitude in a manner the most instructive, affecting, and convincing. It proved that these men possessed something more than a noble-minded human nature; that they were influenced by the Spirit of the living and true God.

3. This miraculous interposition, in a very eminent degree, vindicated the majesty and power of Jehovah. The Hebrews

had been a nation of distinguished rank among the martial and political powers of Asia. It was one of the greatest glories of the proud King of Assyria, that he had subdued "the remote Judea;" and the fact was recorded in the sculptures of his palace with the utmost pomp. It was known in the earliest part of Hebrew history, that the rapid and successful progress of this people originated in the special blessing and assistance afforded them by the Lord. (Joshua ii, 9-11.) And this judgment was confirmed by a series of miraculous interpositions which extended to the days of Sennacherib. When, therefore, the throne of Judah fell before the power of Nebuchadnezzar, it was natural for the conqueror and the surrounding nations to conclude, that the Lord could no longer defend his people; and as the ruin of the Hebrew state and polity was complete, it seemed as if the power of the Lord had utterly failed: so that, with every captive Hebrew, wandering in the land of his conquerors, there was read a manifesto to the dishonor of the God of the Hebrews, and to the glory of the gods of Babylon. But what was the announcement made by this miracle? Here all the royal power and religious authority of the Chaldean empire were united to accomplish a particular object, and that object one on which the king had set his heart above every other. These Hebrews, by their disobedience to the royal will, had drawn on themselves the utmost vengeance which could be inflicted on them; and they are, accordingly, cast into "the burning fiery furnace;" and from this their God delivers them! The vast concourse of noble and official persons present witness the strange sight of three helpless young Hebrews, supported only by their God, successfully daring to disobey the king's command, harmlessly exposing themselves to all the fury of his threatened punishment, and by their miraculous deliverance completely defeating the object of the king, and extorting from him a full admission of his ignominious defeat. He had said, in all his arrogant assumption of divinity, "Who is that

God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" But now, abashed and confounded, he admits, "There is no other God that can deliver after this sort." Dan. iii, 15, 29. So that this august assembly, called together for the special purpose of prostrating all power, political and religious, under the feet of the Babylonish king, issued a full and formal proclamation of the unequaled supremacy, of the might, majesty, and power of the God of Israel. The fallen and humbled condition of his people serves the more significantly to set forth the power and glory of Jehovah.

4. The profane assumption of the proud King of Babylon was a violent and direct aggression on the cardinal principle of Hebrew faith. As we stated at the commencement of this discourse, the promise of a Divine Redeemer was inwrought into the whole texture of the civil and political polity of the Hebrews; it was their boast, their glory, and their hope, that the Lord would "raise unto David a righteous branch; and a King shall reign and prosper," who should have "the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." Jer. xxiii, 5; Psalm ii, 8. But if the profane project of the King of Babylon should succeed, this hope would be destroyed. If the promises of a Divine Son and a universal King were to be accomplished in Nebuchadnezzar, the hope of Israel was annihilated. The question at issue, therefore, was simply this, whether the promise of redemption by a Divine Saviour should be still entertained, or be lost in the proud and martial sovereign who then reigned over Babylon. The Lord himself, however, interposed, and solved the problem. The Son of God appeared in the fire with his servants, and saved them from all harm. He so clearly revealed his true character to the profane king, that, standing astonished at the sight, he was constrained to renounce the claims which he had put forth with so much anxiety, and which he had made such immense efforts to establish. He not only did this, but fully and without reserve acknowledged the true Son of God. What



a declaration was this in favor of the sacred prophecies and the religious hopes of the persecuted and down-trodden Hebrews, for Nebuchadnezzar to say, in the face of that assembled multitude, "No, I am not the Son of God; there he is in the fire?" We can conceive of nothing which could have been done in that crisis of the Hebrews' history, which would have tended more powerfully to sustain their faith and hope, than did this merciful interposition.

5. What, then, was the effect of the miracle and its immediate results on the assembled multitude of judges, officers, and captains, which had been convened on the plains of Dura? They had been brought there to do the most unreasonable, extravagant, and profane honor to the king; to acknowledge at once his kingly power and his divine character. They were prepared to do this; they actually did it; they performed the impious act of prostration, and rose to see him, whom they had thus profanely exalted, exulting in his newly recognized dignity. They were disappointed. It was found that the recognition of his divinity had not been universal; the criminal minority must therefore be destroyed, before the work on which all hearts were set was regarded as accomplished. This was attempted, but, as we have seen, the result was a glorious triumph of the noble and pious minority. The king, whom the multitude had recognized as divine, was found to be utterly unable to inflict any punishment on the subjects who refused to obey his will; nay, more, he is so convinced or confounded by the miracle before him, that he applauds the men whom he had vainly attempted to destroy, raises them to honor and dignity, recognizes the Hebrew Saviour as the Son of God, and thus, by his own lips, and by his own acts, pronounces the most unmitigated condemnation on his own proud and impious assumption. Perhaps there were none of these assembled officers but had, in their respective governments, some poor Hebrews, who had sought in flight from Judea an escape from the miseries which afflicted their

country, while in many cases these would be captive exiles. Such were before regarded as outcasts; but what a sacred character, what a dignity was thrown around every individual Hebrew by this miracle! Above all, the multitude was convened that, on its separation, every man might return to his government, or to his office, full of the story of the apotheosis of Nebuchadnezzar: now they have to go back and say everywhere, how the proud king quailed before the Hebrews and their Saviour. Now they separate to publish in every part of these extensive dominions that the Son of God was not a myth, a name and title devised to give honor to inordinate ambition, but a really existent, a living and almighty God, and that this Divine person was in alliance with Hebrews, had actually appeared as their Saviour, and must be expected, when manifested to the world, to appear through them.

It is scarcely possible to over-estimate the impression that would be made on the world through such an event. We have previously shown, that there was ground for the assertion of Suetonius prior to this; but it cannot be doubted that the events of this day filled in the outline of evidence which previously existed, and laid a basis of information amply sufficient to account for the conduct of the Magi, and gave weight, coherence, and currency to the expectation of the Son of God, which was never lost until he actually appeared.

We regard this event, therefore, as one which should not be limited to the deliverance of three good men from a cruel death; but rather as one of those great and sublime interpositions, in which God gloriously revealed his person and his power, to paralyze an anti-Christian aggression, to honor and uphold his truth, and to give it a mighty impetus and an immense circle of action on the hearts and minds of mankind.

## DISCOURSE VIII.

## PARADISE REGAINED.

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.—LUKE xxiii, 43.

THE incarnation of the Son of God forms the grand center of the world's history. The preceding discourses have fully shown, that, from the beginning, this great event has been the prominent subject of revealed truth. The law and the prophets, the promises and the threatenings, the ritual and the types of the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, are full of direct and implied allusions to the Son of God and his manifestation in the flesh.

Not only was the advent of Christ the great end of all Old Testament religion ; it was equally the point to which all ancient history converged, and in direct reference to which the world was providentially governed during the pre-Christian ages. The extent to which the Gentile nations were imbued with the promise of a Saviour, and influenced (although in many cases by perverted views of its true character) by the expectation of his appearance, is not to be apprehended without careful inquiry and diligent study. The man of the world may close his eyes to the wonders of Divine revelation, and have his attention absorbed by the secondary causes of the oscillations of nations ; but the Christian who will studiously inquire into the eventful history of his race during the six centuries before Christ, with the volume of sacred prophecy before him, will soon discover that a predetermined Divine purpose raised up one empire, and put down another ; gave this people power, and removed that people into obscurity ; with evident and avowed reference to the coming and kingdom of the Saviour.

But if the life of Christ was the end to which all the previous history and religion of the world tended, the death of the Saviour was certainly the culminating point of his career. His incarnation was a miracle wrapped in the most profound mystery, in the contemplation of which all created intellect seems paralyzed. His teaching was a fountain of pure and spiritual wisdom, of which the serious mind knows not which to admire most, its vast profundity or its beautiful simplicity. His course of conduct was a living illustration of the Divine law, in all its deep spirituality and vast variety of detail. His miracles unveiled the might and majesty of God, although wielded by one "in the form of a servant." But who can speak adequately of his passion and death? These were of all miracles the most miraculous. Here we see the most perfect innocence and the most intense punitive agony, the absence of all guilt, the presence of all pain. Indeed, the death of Christ presents a problem which can never be solved but by the principle of vicarious atonement. It is only by regarding him as bearing "our sins in his own body on the tree," (1 Peter ii, 24,) by adopting the prophetic declaration: "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed;" it is only in this manner that the death of the Messiah can be reconciled to reason, or be regarded as an event which could possibly occur under the administration of Divine government.

Yet this event actually took place, and is presented to our serious attention in the connection of the portion of Holy Scripture now under consideration. And perhaps no single circumstance connected with this unparalleled occasion is in itself so truly marvelous as that which these words unfold. To enhance the indignity, to add to the degrading humiliation, of the Saviour's crucifixion, two thieves, acknowledged malefactors, were crucified with him, one on either side of his cross. These, we are told, echoed the clamor of the ferocious

multitude beneath, and said: "If he be Christ the King of Israel, the Chosen of God, let him now come down from the cross; and we will believe him." One of them persisted in this spirit and conduct, and urged him, saying: "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." But by this time the other malefactor had been brought under a different influence, and breathed another spirit; so that he rebuked his fellow, saying: "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? and we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to-day thou shalt be with me in paradise."

It is our present purpose to consider this remarkable saying, as we have studied the subjects of preceding discourses, in connection with the great economy of grace, and thus to ascertain, as far as possible, its real import, and the blessings which it promises. In order to this we will endeavor,

I. To inquire into the origin and meaning of the term "paradise," here used by the Saviour, and the sense in which it is employed on this occasion.

II. We will consider the true character of the promise thus made to the penitent thief, and the information which it affords respecting the privileges and blessings of the Gospel.

I. We have to direct our attention to the origin and meaning of the term "paradise," here used by the Saviour, and the sense in which it was employed on this occasion.

This is the first time the word "paradise" occurs in the English Bible, and it is also the first time that the original word (*παράδεισος*) is found in the Greek New Testament. It is therefore most desirable, occurring as it does in the crisis of our Redeemer's personal history, and in a most important declaration of his to the dying thief, that we obtain clear views of its meaning and application.

The word is not a native Greek term, but one imported from



the East, probably from Persia; and to comprehend its precise import and fullness of meaning, we must briefly refer to the practices and institutions of Persia and other ancient and neighboring nations.

The attentive explorer of the antiquities of these early kingdoms will always find himself puzzled with usages and appearances which, according to our views, seem very conflicting and embarrassing. The more he studies the official character of the sovereigns of Assyria, Babylon, or Persia, the less does he know whether to regard one of these dignitaries as a king, a priest, or a god. These sovereigns are so identified with the duties, attributes, and honors of these several dignities, that it is frequently difficult to discover which predominates. At one time the king is seen at the head of an army, like a real martial prince; at another he is represented as bearing a sacrificial mace, or as engaged in some act of worship of a sacerdotal character; and yet, again, we have him placed before us accompanied with emblems of divinity, and actually the object of religious adoration to all who approach him.

Nor does this strange mixture, this remarkable confusion of character, terminate with the person of the king; it extends to the most important and magnificent public buildings of these countries. Nowhere do we find more colossal and gorgeous structures than in those Eastern nations. Even in ruins they astonish us by their grandeur of outline, their vast extent, and the beauty and endless variety of their details. Yet, after a most careful and extensive investigation of these wonderful erections, the question is suggested, What were they? What was their object and end? Were they palaces or temples?

Let us hear what a scientific author, who has carefully studied the subject without any reference to its religious bearing, says in reply to these questions: "It is impossible to say whether the great buildings there were, properly speaking, mere places of worship, or residences of the sovereigns. That

the king did generally, if not always, reside within their walls, seems nearly certain; and that all the great ceremonies and ministrations of government took place within these walls, are facts that can scarcely be doubted: indeed, they seem at first sight to have been built almost wholly for these kingly purposes; whereas, on the other hand, the portion set apart for the image of the god, if there ever was one, or exclusively devoted to religious ceremonies, is so small and insignificant as scarcely to deserve notice in comparison to the rest. Yet these buildings were certainly temples, and the only ones of the most theocratic religion the world ever knew, though at the same time they were the palaces of the most absolute kings of whom we have any record. To name, therefore, these palace-temples or temple-palaces, as well as our Persepolitan buildings, we must re-define our words, and come to a clearer understanding of the terms we use, before we can explain what the buildings of which we are now treating really were.

“When we speak of a Greek or Roman temple, we perfectly understand the term we use. It was a building simple in plan and outline, meant to contain an image of the god to whom it was dedicated, and wholly devoted to the religious ceremonies connected with the prescribed worship of that deity. A Christian church, in like manner, was in all ages a temple, wholly devoted to religious worship, without any secular use; a hall, in short, where people may congregate to worship the great God himself, or the saint to whom it is dedicated, but with the distinct idea that it is the house of God, sacred to the purposes of religion, and the fit and proper place in which to offer up prayer and sacrifice.

“In like manner, a palace in all the countries of Europe is, and has always been, merely a large house. It possesses the sleeping, eating, and state and festival apartments, which are found in the dwellings of all men of the middle and even of the lower classes; larger, more numerous, and more splendid, of course,

but dedicated to the same uses, and to them only. In modern times a king is only a chief magistrate; in the Middle Ages he was a leader; and neither Greece nor Rome ever had kings in the Asiatic sense of the word, at least, certainly not after Rome ceased to be Etruscan, or, in other words, Asiatic, in her form of government. In Persia, however, and, indeed, throughout the East, the king is an essential and principal part of all forms of government, and virtually, also, the chief priest of his people, and head of the religions of his country. We should have a far more distinct idea of the Eastern kingly offices and functions in ancient days, if we called him 'caliph' or 'pope' instead of 'king;' and were it not that with us the latter title is applied to only one potentate on earth, and we can scarcely understand the idea of there being or having been another, the term is just such a one as would correctly define that union of temporal and spiritual power which we find united in the Persian monarch; and at the same time, as a necessary corollary, the term 'basilica,' in its original Roman sense, would as correctly describe the buildings we have been examining at Persepolis.

"The actual dwelling-places of the king they certainly were not, nor is there any trace on the platform of such a range of apartments as would have suited a harem, which, without going any further than the Book of Esther, we know was possessed by the very king who built all the principal edifices here. Neither in Assyria, nor, indeed, in Asia, from the earliest day to the present hour, did there ever exist a palace without a range of private and secluded apartments, which virtually form the dwelling of the sovereign; but there neither is a trace of such a thing here, nor is there room for it on the principal platform. If it stood here at all, it must have been on the lower southern terrace; but from that being so much overlooked, it is very improbable that it should have been there, and I am far more inclined to think it stood on the plain to the southward of the platform, or perhaps even more probably at Istakr.

“If, however, these buildings were not palaces, according to our usual acceptance of the term, still less were they temples; for, as Herodotus told us long ago, ‘the Persians have neither images, nor temples, nor altars; these they consider unlawful, and impute folly to those that make them.’”—*Fergusson’s Palaces of Nineveh, etc.*, p. 189.

This important extract not only furnishes much valuable information in strict accordance with what has been advanced in preceding discourses, but prepares our way for an accurate comprehension of the subject before us. For we must take into account with the above the important fact, that the sacred character pertaining to these palace-temples was not limited to the range of courts and buildings of which they were composed, but extended to a large inclosed space beyond; and hence an eminent author observes on this subject: “We must bear in mind that the temple of the ancients was very different from one of our churches. It comprised a considerable extent of ground inclosed by walls, within which were courts, a grove, pieces of water, sometimes habitations for the priests, and, lastly, the temple properly so called.”—*Larcher’s Notes on Herodotus*, vol. i, p. 231.

It seems a strange contradiction to all our notions of a temple to apply the name, and to extend the sanctity and veneration with which it is associated, to inclosed pleasure-grounds, gardens, trees, and pieces of water. Yet if we carry our inquiries to the period anterior to Greek civilization and influence, we shall find that the most eminent of the sacred places of the Gentile nations were of this kind.

Indeed, long before temples were erected, a sacred garden, grove, or inclosure was the place of worship; and this seems to have been so common, that, as far as our researches can extend, it prevailed throughout the world. It was a full acquaintance with this fact which induced Pliny to say: “In old time trees were the very temples of the gods; and verily we ourselves adore not with more reverence and devotion the

stately images of the gods within our temples, (made though they be of beautiful gold and beautiful ivory,) than the very groves and tufts of trees, where we worship the same gods in all religious silence."—*Natural History*, lib. xii, cap. 1. So common, indeed, was it in ancient times to worship in such woody inclosures, that in the time of Strabo it was usual to call sacred places "groves," even though there were no trees there.

There were numerous sacred places prepared by the ancients, in which these views of the sanctity of garden grounds were embodied in a manner which leaves no doubt that the origin of this singular opinion and practice had reference to the events which occurred in the garden of Eden. We may briefly notice a few of these.

Near to the present city of Cadiz, there was, in very ancient times, a remarkable inclosure, consecrated by solemn rites, and planted as a delightful garden. In the midst of it were two very remarkable trees, which were said to grow out of the tomb of a tricorporate monster, which had been slain there by Hercules, who was, in consequence, worshiped in a temple that stood on an island in a lake close by, under the title of (Σωτήρ) "the Saviour." Here were also two remarkable fountains, and a famous olive-tree, the known symbol of immortality. From this sacred spot all women were driven away, being regarded as the primary cause of mischief and calamity. The temple was guarded by lions and a flaming fire. Here, also, was an altar dedicated to Old Age, and those who attended it "sang pæans in honor of Death." Here, too, were altars dedicated to Poverty, manual Labor, and Hercules.

A large district in Campania, on the coast of Italy, was regarded as similarly sacred. It was one vast inclosure, covering many miles of territory, and embracing lakes, groves, gardens, rivers, all on the grandest scale, within its hallowed precincts. Here was a sacred tree, surrounded by compound



figures, armed with flames. Here, too, were sacred rivers; and throughout this region the serpent was peculiarly honored, and its image constituted the chief military ensign of the ancient inhabitants.

At Epirus, a northwestern province of ancient Greece, there was another sacred inclosure. Here was a grove, and a river parted into four heads, and forming four streams. Close by was Phenice, formerly dedicated to the worship of the palm-tree, the emblem, in all antiquity, of immortality. Another circular grove on these shores was dedicated to Apollo, and within its limits serpents were kept, which were said to be descended from the Delphian Python, who, in other words, was "the persuader, the deceiver."

We might go on, and speak of the garden of the Hesperides and its golden fruit, guarded by a dragon, which was encountered and slain by Hercules, the mortal son of the supreme god; of the gardens of Alcinous, in Corcyra, with their trees, and fruit good for food, and sacred fountains, and temple with gorgeous roof and ornaments, and metallic dogs instinct with perpetual life; and the sacred grove of Dodona, our own Druid groves, and many others. But enough has been said to show the prevalence of the ancient practice of making sacred inclosures, where gardens or trees were planted, and everything possible was done, by representations and emblems, to make such places resemblances of the primitive paradise, and to commemorate the leading figures of the paradisiacal history.

The more this view of the case is applied to the various accounts which have come down to us of the mythological persons and the history of their life and actions, of the institutions of heathenism generally, and especially of their sacred places, the more fully will its soundness and accuracy be apparent. The hoped-for admission to the Elysium of Greek and Roman mythology will be seen to be a restoration of paradise. The characters of Apollo, Orpheus, Hercules, Chreeshna, and others,

will appear in their true light, as fabled manifestations of the Divine Son. The recently disinterred remains of the sacred buildings of Assyria unite with those of Persia and Egypt in presenting to our view cherubic compound forms, adorning every entrance and standing at every portal, as if to remind all of the office of the primitive cherubim; while the constant recurrence of the sacred tree, the allusions to sacrifice and the sacred fire, unite in confirming us in this conclusion.

Yet, clear as this conclusion is to our minds, we doubt whether those who have not, by repeated references to the whole mass of evidence, fully realized its united bearing in their own conviction, will be prepared to receive and admit it as an established and unquestionable fact, that these sacred places were made, and maintained, as commemorative imitations of the garden of Eden. It may be admitted that this is likely and probable; but there are many, we fear, who will suspend their judgment, and decline to admit its certainty.

For the sake of such, we are glad to be able to furnish further evidence of so conclusive a character as will, we believe, remove all doubt on the subject from the most incredulous. About four centuries before the Christian era, a pretender to the throne of Persia procured a large body of Greek soldiers, to aid him in his attempt to seize the throne. The aspiring prince fell in the battle which ensued, and his Greek auxiliaries had to make the best of their way to their own country. Xenophon was their leader during this perilous journey. And it is difficult to say, whether he has immortalized himself more by his great sagacity and military talent in conducting this famous retreat, or by the judgment and eloquence with which he has given us the account of the return of the "ten thousand Greeks" in his *Anabasis*.

At the time when this expedition took place, we cannot learn that the term "paradise" had ever been heard in Western Asia, or known in Greece. A word having some remote analogy to it in sense and in sound, is found in the Hebrew

Bible, פֶּרֶדֶס, *pardès*. It occurs but three times in the Hebrew Scriptures, and never in connection with Eden, or in allusion to the garden there. In Neh. ii, 8, it is rendered in our version "forest," and in two other places (Eccles. ii, 5; Canticles iv, 13) it is translated "orchard." But to this date we believe the term "paradise" was unknown to the Greek language and to the Hebrew. In the very beginning of Xenophon's account of this expedition, he has the following passage: "Here (at Celæna) the palace of Cyrus stood, with a large *paradise* full of wild beasts, which Cyrus hunted on horseback, when he had a mind to exercise himself and his horses. Through the middle of this paradise runs the River Mæander, but the head of it rises in the palace." We see here that, although the idea of sacredness had been so deteriorated that this place was made a kind of hunting-ground for the king, it nevertheless exhibits several significant resemblances to Eden. Here were trees and the meandering river, and this river flowing out of the palace-temple as its source. Probably the various beasts were at first introduced into these places in allusion to man's indiscriminate intercourse with them before his fall.

This place, it seems, the Persians called "paradise," or a name which, when rendered into Greek letters, assumed this form; and through Xenophon this word, as the name of these sacred gardens or parks, became known in Western Asia and Greece. This fact of itself would not, of course, shed very much light on our inquiry. But about a hundred years after Xenophon, the Greek translators of the Scriptures proceeded to compose the Septuagint version of the Old Testament. They had not proceeded far with their task before they came to the verse which in our version is read, "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed." These men, fully versed in Hebrew literature and oriental learning, and possessing a perfect acquaintance with the Greek, had to render the original text of this passage into that language. The inquiry is natural and

important: How did they translate this text into Greek? They had the word, *κήπος*, *keepos*, "a garden or plantation," which had been in use by their best writers from the days of Homer, and other cognate terms, which, considered in a philological point of view, would appear suitable to this occasion. None of these words, however, were selected by the LXX as the rendering for this garden in the translation of the passage. Passing by all these, they fixed on this term, which had been newly imported into the language by Xenophon, and called the cultivated inclosure of Eden a "paradise."

If nothing further could be added to this significant fact; if such a singular decision had to be considered merely as the adoption by the LXX of the oriental name generally given to the sacred park-like grounds which surrounded the palace-temples of the East, as a designation for the garden of Eden; it would be sufficient to justify the opinion that these sacred inclosures were regarded by the translators as, in some sense, imitations of the primitive garden. If it had not been so, it is not easy to conceive why this name should have been adopted, to the exclusion of every native word bearing an analogous sense. But if these translators knew that it had always been the practice in the East to make sacred places imitate, as far as possible, the primitive garden in Eden; that this was the origin of the groves in which the patriarchs worshiped, and of practices which were long continued by the ancient Hebrews; then we can readily perceive that they would select the term "paradise," as exactly the word to be used in the text to which we have referred.

And that this was the case is evident from what has been already said, and from other evidence which might be adduced. We cannot here extend our investigation; but two or three elements of information may be added. It may be laid down as a maxim, that "when traditions are found to prevail universally, we may feel morally certain that the events to which

they refer did actually happen;" and it may be regarded as equally certain, that when places or institutions, found in every part of the habitable globe, bear undoubted and studied features of similarity to some primitive place or thing, this conformity is to be attributed to intention and design. Such was evidently the case with the sacred places which have been referred to, and many others which might be mentioned.

This was the case in respect to the idolatrous practices of the Jews. For that reason the Lord prohibited the use of groves among them. In patriarchal times this was a common practice, and in accordance with the usages of the ancient Gentile people. Hence we find Abraham planting a grove in Beersheba. (Gen. xxi, 33.) These groves were afterward forbidden. (Deut. xvi, 21; Exod. xxxiv, 13.) Yet the prohibition was neglected, and the idolatrous practices of the heathen in connection with such places were continued by the Hebrews. (Isaiah i, 29; lxv, 3.) And that these gardens were imitations of the garden of Eden, is evident from the distinguishing feature which they present, namely, their having "one tree in the midst." (Isaiah lxvi, 17.)

Thus we find these garden-imitations of "paradise" prevalent among the ancient Gentile nations, and also among the Hebrews, in a manner which amply justifies the application of the term "paradise" to the original garden of Eden. Our whole induction is, however, fully confirmed, and the subject decisively and forever settled, by the terms of our Redeemer's promise to the dying thief. In this important passage, our Lord adopts the term "paradise" evidently in reference to the garden of Eden, as a type of the habitation of redeemed spirits. His language, therefore, considering the origin of the principal term used, clearly asserts two things: first, the direct reference of the paradises of the heathens and Hebrews to the garden of Eden, as imitations or commemorative memorials of that sacred spot; and, secondly, that this primitive garden



was typical of the abode of the blessed, which is accordingly designated by the same name.

We have now to consider—

II. The true character of this promise, and the information which it affords respecting the privileges and blessings of the Gospel. The promise asserts that Christ had so nearly accomplished his work as man's Redeemer, that on this very day he would take the penitent criminal into paradise.

It has been intimated in the preceding discourses, that this was the great work which the Redeemer was expected to accomplish. Paradise had been lost by the sin of man; but was to be recovered by the suffering and victory of the Saviour. Hence its memory was kept up by sacred places, modeled as nearly as possible on the plan of the original garden; and hence also the many traditions similar to that of Hercules and the garden of the Hesperides, where we have a sacred garden whose fruit was guarded by an immense dragon, which the hero-deity, in the character of the Saviour, slew, and secured the precious fruit.

There seems no reason to doubt that the acquaintance which the Hebrews had with the East, during and after the captivity, enabled them to apprehend fully the bearing of all these practices and traditions on the great promise of redemption; and thus to see the true fulfillment of their own prophecies in its ultimate issue and glorious results. We have no passage of the Old Testament Scriptures which speaks of heaven, or the future abode of the saved, under the figure of the garden of Eden. But no sooner was the term "paradise" introduced, and its origin and associations understood, than we find the practice of speaking of heavenly glory as "paradise" brought into use also, and become frequent. Accordingly, in the Chaldee Targums, "the garden of Eden" is put as the exposition of heavenly blessedness. (Psalm xc, 17, and in many other places.) The Talmudical writings also contain frequent references to *paradise*, as the immortal heaven to which the

spirits of the just are admitted upon their liberation from the body. The book *Zohar* speaks of an earthly and a heavenly *paradise*, of which the latter excels the former as much as "light does darkness."

By the adoption and consequent progressive use of the term in the religious writings of the Hebrews, the application of the word became generally understood in the sense in which it was applied by the Saviour. The conclusion to which we have been led in the former part of this discourse, had evidently been adopted by the Hebrews of our Lord's time as a settled and general opinion; and therefore the words used in the remarkable promise before us, conveyed an intelligible assurance to the penitent thief, that, in that very day, his soul should be taken into the heavenly abode of happy spirits.

We must, however, notice several particulars connected with this most marvelous transaction.

1. It is observable, that the criminal had some correct views of the character of the promised Redeemer. He saw Jesus before him in the lowest depth of humiliation and agony. He had been scourged, and mocked, and smitten, and was now hanging nailed to the cross. There was not one individual in the whole land at that moment in a condition so painful and deplorable as he. And yet this thief not only looked to him for refuge, but recognized him as the Redeemer in his proper character. He knew the Saviour was to suffer, and these sufferings he witnessed; he knew also that the Saviour was to reign, and in his attainment of regal dignity he fully believed; and hence he prayed, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."

Now we cannot account for such an acknowledgment of the kingly character of Jesus under such circumstances, nor for the remarkable prayer in which it was breathed forth, by any reference to the ordinary rules of human judgment and action. It is true that this man might have known much of the character and miracles of Jesus. He might have compared

the most remarkable occurrences of his life with the predictions of the Holy Scriptures respecting the appearance of the promised Messiah, and thence have deduced an opinion in favor of his Messiahship. But although this is possible, it does not appear to be very probable; nor is there the slightest allusion in the narrative to any such knowledge or opinion.

The case before us seems rather to exhibit the mighty operation of the Spirit of God in the awakening, instruction, and conversion of a human soul. Here was a man suffering death, as he freely and fully admits, "justly," receiving "the due reward" of his "deeds." By his side the Saviour hangs in dying agony; yet the culprit, in this condition, recognizes him as the "Lord," and prays that when he comes into his kingdom he will remember him. As we have said, the means by which he arrived at this information and judgment are not fully apparent; but we are not left altogether ignorant of the reason which existed in the mind of the penitent for his apparently strange conduct. He fully admitted the just and necessary connection between sin and suffering. "We," he said, "receive the due reward of our deeds." But in the case of Jesus he saw the most intense dying agony inflicted on one who had "done nothing amiss." This was a sufficient basis for his faith. It was the first time in the history of the world that such a case had occurred. Never before, since the creation, has there been sinless humanity afflicted with pain. And it was, on the recognized grounds of justice, as unreasonable as it was unjust. Nothing, indeed, but their vicarious character, could have rendered such sufferings compatible with the Divine government. When, therefore, he was seen "wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities," there was the strongest possible evidence of his redeeming character, a sure and certain pledge of his final conquest and victory.

As we have observed, it is not to be supposed that this person reasoned himself in a logical manner to this conclusion

from these premises. But it does seem that the Divine Spirit led his mind to an apprehension of the true character of Jesus, by giving him clear and strong views of these unquestionable principles. A sinless sufferer, he saw and felt, could be no other than he who had been predicted to bruise the serpent's head, and to whom it appertained to exercise an everlasting dominion, to reign from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

But what was the meaning of this prayer? Here was a guilty criminal enduring punishment, which he knew would terminate in a violent and very painful death. And he prays, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." What did he intend to ask in this petition? One thing is certain: its answer must have been expected after death. Neither the suppliant nor the Saviour had any prospect of receiving good in this life. The latter had been challenged to come down from the cross and save himself; but the language before us is no part of that insulting taunt, but rather a protest against its cruelty and wickedness. The dying thief must, therefore, have believed that after having suffered death, Jesus would be put in possession of a kingdom; and in this confidence he prayed, "Lord, remember me."

2. We must now particularly attend to the Saviour's reply: "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." This, in the first place, is an assertion that the Lord would on that day enter paradise. He had been recognized in the midst of his greatest sufferings as the "Lord." He had been addressed as if he were going to take possession of a kingdom. He responds to the appeal, by assuring the suppliant that it was even so; that, although then hanging on the cross in dying agony, he would, on that very day, enter the heavenly paradise. He was now drinking the cup which his Father had prepared. He was treading the wine-press, he was bearing the burden of a world's iniquity; his human nature, mysteriously as it was united with Divinity, was being crushed and bruised, and

offered up a sacrifice for sin; and, his inscrutable struggle being ended, his infinite sacrifice completed, the Son of God was to enter into his kingdom, and, as man's Redeemer, to reign over all worlds. To take possession of this glory and power, he would enter the heavenly abode of happy spirits, and take his place there as their redeeming God, as the Saviour who had bought their peace by his own sacrificial death on the cross, who had loved them unto death, and given himself to death for them. In this character the crucified Jesus would, on that very day, pass into heaven as the Lord of glory.

But more: He said he would take the thief with him. Much ingenuity has been employed to free this man from the charge of real criminality. It has been supposed that he was not, in the proper sense of the word, *a thief*; but that he and his companion were Jews who had conscientious opposition in their minds to the Roman government of Judea, and had committed themselves by such acts of hostility to the ruling power as brought them to the cross. There does not appear to be any solid foundation for the surmise. They are called "thieves" by the use of terms of undoubted import, and there is nothing in the narrative at variance with this statement. On the contrary, the plain sense of the record is quite opposed to the notion that these men were merely Hebrew patriots, who suffered for their resistance to the Roman power; for in that case they would regard themselves as dying martyrs in the cause of their country; but this was not the fact; they admitted that they "suffered justly;" a plain proof that the whole account may be safely and fully received.

This convicted and suffering thief was promised that he on that day should be taken into paradise! How fully such a declaration proves the perfection of Christ's sacrifice, the glorious sufficiency of his redeeming power! This man hung on the cross a guilty wretch; he was under the condemnation of the law, the curse of God rested upon him; his heart was de-



praved, polluted, and defiled by sin in all its internal action and outward development. Yet in this fearful state of alienation from God, and enmity against him, he is told, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." The power that thus spoke unto him, must have been equal to make atonement for all his guilt, to purge away all his impurity. Our minds delight to rest on this glorious theme, the all-sufficiency of Christ as our Redeemer. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh," fully and at once accomplished. We do well to estimate correctly the magnitude of this great work. Looking alone at the single case before us, what an amount of sin there was to be expiated! Yet this was only a type of all mankind, for all have sinned. A sacrifice of infinite merit was therefore required, an oblation of unlimited prevalency and power. All this was found in "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Of him every individual in a guilty world may say, "He bore my sins in his own body on the tree," and "by his stripes we are healed." Then let the power necessary to purify and save this blood-bought human spirit be considered. We admit that the sacrifice of Christ has expiated his guilt, fearfully great as it is; but then his whole moral nature is to be sanctified and made holy. The mind in which but yesterday hellish passions raged, fleshly appetites reigned, and earthly and vile affections and desires were paramount, is "to-day" to be so fully saved from all impurity, as to be "meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light." We, of course, presume that the mind of the sinner fully submits to the teaching and guidance of the Spirit of grace; but even with this presumption, how vast the work to be done? To cleanse the soul from the leprosy of sin! Yet the means provided are equal to the disease: "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." The sovereign power of the Divine Redeemer can beat down all our enemies under our feet, and raise the penitent soul from the lowest

depths of sin and misery to the sublimest heights of heavenly glory.

Let us endeavor to realize the glorious work as accomplished in the case before us. The Lord Jesus had before this time finished his course of Divine teaching, completed his manifestation of almighty power by numerous miracles, and had, in all the circumstances of his life, although watched with the utmost craft and malignity, and tempted by the most persevering and united energies of men and devils, maintained a character of unsullied purity, a perfect freedom from all sin. All who saw him were constrained to bear witness, as did the penitent thief, "This Man hath done nothing amiss." Having thus far completed the active part of his mission, the Saviour had entered on that great sacrificial offering which was the culminating point of his earthly career. We have seen his passion in Gethsemane, the scourging and indignity which he suffered in the judgment hall, and he now hangs on the cross. There, while in his last agony, the penitent thief prayed, and Jesus responded: "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." These words, like all his other sayings, were "true and faithful;" they were, therefore, verified. Let us follow them out.

The earth was soon enveloped in darkness.

"The sun beheld it—No, the shocking scene  
Drove back his chariot; midnight veil'd his face."

At length the incarnate Redeemer exclaimed, "It is finished," and dismissed his spirit. Still the thief survived; and who knows what passed in his heart during this brief space? He had prayed before the great sacrifice was completed, and before it was completed he had received a promise of salvation. But while he still hung on the cross, the work was finished, the Lamb of God died for the sins of the world. The grand event to which all anterior history and hope had pointed, took place. The mighty act on which all the wisdom of Heaven had been expended, and which embodied the

boundless love of God, the unspeakable gift of Heaven's mercy to man, was performed, and Jesus gave up his life for the sin of the world. Meanwhile, all that was necessary to the accomplishment of the Redeemer's promise was being carried into effect in the mind of the penitent thief.

How vastly different are the operations of the visible and material from those of the invisible and spiritual world! Here was the dying thief hanging on a cross; the day passed away; the soldiers received orders to hasten the death of the criminals; this man's legs were broken, and his body mangled, that the cumulative suffering might expel the agonized spirit. Yet could we but see the marvelous operations then carried on in that spirit, the application of the great atonement, the mighty working of the Holy Ghost, the communication of pardoning mercy, the operation of renewing grace, how startling the contrast! Outward, all was darkness, and suffering, and death; inward, all was Divine power, active grace, and heavenly life. Yet a still mightier contrast was to follow. Jesus died. His weeping and disconsolate disciples placed his body in a tomb, and the mangled remains of the thief were conveyed somewhere, that the air might not be polluted, nor the sanctity of the Sabbath profaned. We can scarcely conceive the impression and feelings which agitated Jerusalem at that hour. The supernatural darkness, the earthquake, the rending of the vail of the temple, the resurrection and appearance of the saints, the tremendous apprehensions which were engendered by these fearful omens, especially when taken in connection with all Old Testament prophecy, all these united to spread a deadly gloom over the city. Even the rulers were far from glorying in their triumph: they were so afraid of future consequences, that they obtained a guard of soldiers to watch over the dead body of Christ.

While all this fearful concern and painful anxiety and suspense distressed the holy city, what was taking place in the spiritual and invisible world? Unquestionably the promise

of the Saviour was carried into effect. Jesus, having fulfilled the Father's will, and finished the great atonement, took to himself his Divine power, and entered upon the crowning work of his Messianic character. He had already redeemed man from the curse of the law by the price of his blood: he had now to redeem him from the bondage of Satan by the power of his Divinity. We cannot pretend to say how gloriously he entered upon this work. We are told that "he led captivity captive;" that, "having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly." Col. ii, 15. How this was done we do not pretend fully to explain; but we do, in the case before us, take one striking instance, and hold it forth for the instruction of the world and the admiration of the Church.

Jesus, having passed through his vicarious death into his kingdom, waited for the spirit of the penitent thief, and while men were covering his mangled body, as a loathsome and unclean thing, Jesus took his redeemed and purified soul into the paradise of God! How glorious was this triumph! The Son of God had left the society of the blessed to undertake his mission of compassion to our world. He had many times, in the course of his career, astonished the inhabitants of heaven by the magnificence of his mercy and the glory of his Divine power; and probably most of all at his death, when

"Around the bloody tree they press'd with strong desire,  
The wondrous sight to see, the Lord of Life expire."

But now, what do they behold? The soul of him who in the morning of that very day, was a guilty, depraved, godless sinner, adjudged, from the dark nature and great number of his crimes, to be unfit for earth, now, by the atonement of Jesus and prevalence of his redeeming grace, translated to heaven? They see him who had been driven from earth for his sin, the companion of Jesus in glory!

There can be no doubt that the Jewish rulers selected these

criminals as offenders of the blackest character, to be crucified with Jesus, in order to add the utmost disgrace and obloquy to the measure of his sufferings. Yet we see that in this, as in every other case, what was intended to cover him with reproach, redounds to his glory. The mercy and Divine power of the Lord Jesus descend to the deepest abyss of this sinner's guilt and depravity, and raise him from the threshold of hell to the height of heavenly glory; and having applied to his soul a blood-bought pardon, and renewed his spirit by sanctifying grace, he takes this wonderful trophy of his redeeming mercy and power into heaven. Did any of the celestial hosts, when they heard of the return of the Son of God from his mission of mercy to earth, ask whether he had succeeded in his great enterprise, and to what extent? The Redeemer presented a triumphant answer to earth and heaven in the presentation of the spirit of the redeemed thief in the paradise of God. No stronger proof of the perfect and complete efficiency of the whole scheme of redemption can be given than this fact. It is impossible that a more glorious demonstration of the full accomplishment of the plan of redemption in the life and death of Jesus could have been desired, than we have in the salvation of this criminal.

3. And it must be observed, that this human soul was introduced into heaven as into paradise. We know that the first man was placed in the earthly paradise when innocent and holy, and living in happy union with God; that he was expelled, when he had fallen into sin; that, impure and guilty, he was unfit to stand on that soil, to breathe that atmosphere; incapable, indeed, to hold communion with the God who dwelt there. He was therefore driven forth from the garden by the immediate act of God, as a measure rendered absolutely necessary by his altered state and condition. Yet, what is the case before us? We have here, not a learned, amiable, virtuous man; not a man who, according to the low standard of this world's morality, was a good man. No, we have ■



man whom wicked men adjudged to be unfit to live; a man who himself admitted that he was justly doomed to die; ■ convicted and condemned thief, a wretch perishing under the punishment of his sins. Yet such a one, even in this state, is led by Divine grace to apply to Jesus, and he is saved, and translated to paradise! "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" What then does the salvation of this spirit prove? Clearly that all that sin had wrought in him had been undone; that all the works of the devil had been destroyed; that all the evil which rendered man unfit for paradise, and incapable of communion with God, had been removed by the power and mercy of the Redeemer. So the banished one was brought back, and all that was typified by ancient rites was verified; the Redeemer returned with the redeemed sinner, and placed him in the paradise of God.

This would be glorious and triumphant success; but the case before us does more than merely exhibit paradise regained. The primeval garden was on earth, this paradise is in heaven. So high as the heavens are above the earth, so high is the state that the redeemed acquire through grace, beyond all which they lost in Adam. How can our hearts rise to a just apprehension of this subject? How can we fully realize the glorious result of the redeeming work of Christ? We cannot. I despair of setting the case forth. I retire from the attempt. No language I can command, no thoughts I can arrange, no conceptions that I can form, are sufficient to set forth this great salvation. Let me, however, entreat you not to misconstrue this inability. Do not, on this account, imagine that it is unreal, a mere poetic conceit, an undefinable and visionary creation of an excited mind. No! Its vast, and grand, and glorious reality renders it, in all its unfathomed depth and height, immeasurable. Yes, it is as real as sin; as truly matter of fact, in the experience of the penitent and the believing, as were the sufferings and death of Christ to the Redeemer. It is real, and may and ought to be obtained by all.

May I venture to add another observation? We live under the regal administration of the Son of God. The object of his government, and all the appliances of his kingdom, are designed and adapted to lead us to the recognition and experience of this salvation. We live and move, seek our pleasure, and pursue our worldly avocations, in the immediate presence of the truth, the means, and the influence, which wrought this wondrous change in the mind of the dying thief. Let us then hear, obey, believe, and be saved.

I cannot close this discourse without calling attention to the marvelous harmony which is thus seen to pervade the various dispensations of grace. This will be dwelt on more particularly in the following and final address. But we see even in the single case before us a glorious proof of this harmony. In the beginning, sin expelled mankind from the garden of bliss. The justice of God executed the sentence; but before this fearful crisis arrived, it was met and provided for. The counsel of heaven had devised a great and effectual remedy. This was first indicated to man by a local presence of God over the cherubim, which could only be approached by the blood of sacrifice. By this means the way of the spiritual tree of life was kept open. This mode continued to be the way of life to the patriarchs, was further developed in the Mosaic economy, and finally and gloriously consummated by the life, teaching, miracles, and sacrifice of God's Messiah; who, "having overcome the sharpness of death," led the penitent thief into the heavenly paradise, and "opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers."

## DISCOURSE IX.

## REDEMPTION CONSUMMATED.

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.—REVELATION ii, 7.

THE subject brought before us in these words forms a suitable conclusion to the course of investigation which has been prosecuted in the preceding discourses.

That course began with the first pair, while yet in the garden of Eden, but after they had sinned, and while the Son of God was pronouncing sentence on the several criminals. The succeeding discourses have discussed the various prominent manifestations of grace which were made under successive dispensations for the recovery of mankind; until, in the preceding address, we considered the restoration of redeemed man to paradise, his elevation to the presence and glory of God. Our present subject goes beyond even this great salvation, and refers to the amount of privilege and blessing which the redeemed are favored to enjoy in that seat of eternal glory. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

These words direct our attention :

I. To the tree of life, regarded as a typical symbol; and lead us to trace the object of the memorials and imitations of it which were perpetuated in the ancient world.

II. To the tree of life in its antitypical reality, as the abiding source of immortal life and blessing to the redeemed.

III. To the class of persons to whom alone this high privilege will be awarded.

We will then close with a few brief general observations.

I. We have, in the first place, to consider the tree of life as

a typical symbol, and to trace the object of the memorials and imitations of it which were perpetuated in the ancient world.

It is by no means unlikely, that it will be supposed I have proceeded too far in assuming at once the typical character of the tree of life. It will be asked, "Was not this tree provided for a special physical and moral purpose? Why, then, should it be regarded as a typical object?"

It is undoubtedly true that the tree of life was provided to supply an evident and pressing want, which affected man in his state of pristine innocency. But it should never be forgotten, that our nature was created under the direction of an infinite Prescience, which saw the end from the beginning, and was therefore perfectly cognizant of all that would befall humanity in its various and extended career. Man was, in consequence, so formed as to be capable of immortal life; and, at the same time, adapted to pass, without any serious convulsion of his physical system, to the condition of temporal existence in which he is now found. Accordingly, he was so formed as to render food necessary to his continued existence. And as it seems to be an established law of nature, that while the immediate effect of aliment on the human system is invigoration and the maintenance of healthy action, its equally certain, although remote tendency is to conduce to the termination of human existence; man, therefore, was provided, immediately after his creation, not only with food to sustain his system, but with the tree of life, whose fruit was divinely adapted to counteract the natural tendency of food on the animal body, and thus to maintain him in a state of immortal vigor. This statement is now not propounded as an opinion, but rather as an induction from Holy Scripture, of such an evident and undeniable character as to claim the position of established truth. In the true spirit of this sentiment, Dr. Fairbairn, referring to the text which speaks of man's expulsion from the tree of life, (Gen. iii, 24,) says: "These words put it beyond a doubt, that the tree of life was originally intended

for the food of man; and that the fruit it yielded was the divinely appointed medium of maintaining in him the power of an endless life; and that now, since he had sinned against God, and had lost all right to the possession of such a power, he was debarred from access to the natural means of sustaining it, by being himself rigorously excluded from the garden of Eden. What might be the peculiar properties that tree, whether in its own nature it differed essentially from the other trees of the garden, or differed only by a kind of sacramental efficacy attached to it, we are left without any specific information. But in relation to man's frame, there plainly was this difference between it and the other trees, that while they might contribute to his daily support, it alone could preserve, in undecaying vigor, a being to be supported. In accordance with its position in the center of the garden, it possessed the singular virtue of ministering to human life in the fountain-head of upholding that life in its root and principle, while the other trees could only furnish what was needed for the existing functions. *They* might have kept nature alive for a time, as the fruits of the earth do still; but to *it* belonged the property of fortifying the vital powers of nature against the injuries of disease and the dissolution of death.—*Typology*, vol. i, pp. 214, 215.

But while the immediate and direct object of the tree of life is thus distinctly recognized, we must not, on that account, be prevented from setting forth its important typical character. It may be freely admitted, that the immediate physical purpose which it was intended to subserve, would account for the prominent mention of it in connection with man's paradisiacal life; but the most remarkable feature of the case is, that the tree of life is not only found in the paradise of Eden, but also in the paradise of God! In the very beginning of the Bible, information is given of its adaptation to sustain man's physical and earthly nature; and at the close of the sacred canon we are told, that this tree in the heavenly paradise is



equally adapted to contribute to man's spiritual and immortal enjoyment. Does not this clearly prove its typical character? And is not the same fact also indicated by the Scriptural narrative? The sin of man did not destroy the life-sustaining virtue of this tree; it remained what the Creator had made it; but man was now a sinner, and to him, in this character, the fruit of the tree of life was altogether unsuitable.

As a sinner, man had no claim to an undecaying, unfading existence; on the contrary, he was certainly exposed to change and suffering, inasmuch as he was by sin rendered liable to punishment. But in this case, man was not only placed in circumstances which rendered his continued access to the tree of life very improbable; he was, by the precise terms of the Divine declaration, necessarily excluded from it. When the Lord forbade his eating of the fruit of "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," the prohibition was accompanied by the threatening, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, *dying thou shalt die*," words which plainly declared that from the time of his sin he should begin to verge toward death; and, consequently, in the event of his transgression, that he must be expelled from all access to the life-giving power of this tree.

But if this were the only result to be secured, there was a most obvious and simple means of producing it. There was but one tree of life: if, then, this tree, which the condition of man no longer required, were destroyed, everything that the case seemed to demand would have been secured. But this was not done. The tree was preserved, and the garden was continued; and, the man and his wife having been expelled, the cherubim and infolding fire were placed to "preserve the way of the tree of life." As we have said in a preceding discourse, this language does not aptly describe means appointed to prevent immediate access to the life-giving tree, but, rather, means adapted to maintain and perpetuate a way which should, at some future time, afford mankind a passage to the tree of life.

There is another interesting and important truth to be con-

sidered. While the seat of the Divine presence, and the place of worship by sacrifice, were placed to keep the way of the tree of life, man was expelled from it and doomed to death. What did this prove? Clearly that it was the Divine purpose that man should be restored to access to the tree, but that this could only be secured after death. If man were never more to have access to it, then it might have been destroyed, and the way to it could not have been "kept;" while, if man, deprived of its life-sustaining fruit, were doomed to the irrevocable penalty, "dying to die," he could only enjoy the privilege of access to it in another and future state of existence.

These considerations would be sufficient to produce a strong impression, that the Edenic tree of life was preserved as a type of some future good, which man would at last be permitted to enjoy. But when these circumstances are regarded in connection with the further information supplied in other Scriptures, this impression assumes the form of absolute certainty. Man was now shut out of paradise on account of the sin into which he had been led by the temptation of the devil. But a "Seed of the woman" had been promised, who, although doomed to suffer by the power of the tempter, should ultimately completely destroy that power, and thus emancipate man from its thralldom, and restore him to his pristine dignity and happiness. We have not only this promise in the very beginning of the Bible, but we have the great body of the book of Divine revelation occupied in detailing the preparations for the Redeemer's advent, the manner of his birth and life, his teaching, miracles, and death; and here, in the passage before us, after his resurrection and ascension to heaven, we find him, while gloriously appearing to one of his apostles, declaring, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

In these circumstances no reasonable doubt can be entertained, that the tree of life in Eden was certainly a type of the means by which man was to be sustained in immortal hap-

pineness and glory in the heavenly world. This place and this tree served all the purposes necessary for the probation of the first pair during the period of their innocence. Nay, more: as man was driven from paradise on account of his sin, this garden of delights and this sacred tree were preserved, in order to impress on the minds of the first sinners the great fact, that the promised Redeemer, and the scheme of mercy to be carried into operation through him, were designed to remove sin—the grand cause of man's expulsion—from the human heart, and thus to prepare him for a return to unmingled blessedness and immortal life. But as it was a settled element in the economy of redemption, that death should intervene, it being "appointed unto men once to die," this garden could not have been intended as the real seat of their happiness, nor could this tree have been the actual means of ministering to their immortality. The only object, therefore, of the preservation of the garden and the tree, and of their being connected so prominently with the primitive place of worship after the Fall, must have been because they were intended to serve as visible types and emblems of that future and spiritual enjoyment which was to be provided for mankind through the merits of the Redeemer.

It must not, however, be forgotten, that as memorials and imitations of paradise were very general in the ancient world, so the tree of life was equally remembered and celebrated. The further question is then presented to our attention, What was the object and end of these memorials of the tree of life?

Let us first endeavor to establish the fact, by referring to the sacred places and practices of the ancient world.

What was said in the last discourse of the prevalence of memorials of paradise generally, distinguished as they were by one or two trees in the midst, may be referred to, as directly bearing upon this subject. Sometimes, indeed, the prominent tree was evidently intended to represent the tree of knowl-

edge, the serpent being exhibited as entwined about it, and taking the fruit in its mouth. At other times, it is equally certain, the tree of life is the object of the emblem; as, for instance, in the garden of the Hesperides, where Hercules, as the promised Son, is described as obtaining certain golden apples from a sacred tree which grew in a garden, although guarded by a dragon. He slew the dragon, and obtained the precious fruit.

Almost every ancient country furnishes illustrations on this head. The sculptures of ancient Assyria are full of allusions to this sacred tree. It is introduced on every important occasion. The king is represented kneeling before it, sacrifice being performed in its vicinity. Figures of its leaves and branches were embroidered on the royal robes, embossed on the arms, painted on the walls; it became, indeed, one of the most frequent, as it was the most beautiful architectural ornament. The vine, the pine, and the fir, are the most commonly exhibited in this character, and these are frequently interspersed with flowers. To those who have carefully studied all the bearings of this subject, the origin of these emblematic figures is very evident. On this point it will be sufficient to give the following extract from Mr. Layard: "The flowers on the earlier monuments are either circular, with five or more petals, or resemble the Greek honeysuckle. From the constant introduction of the tree ornamented with them, into groups representing the performance of religious ceremonies, *there cannot be a doubt* that they were symbolical, and were invested with a sacred character. The sacred tree, or tree of life, so universally recognized in eastern systems of theology, is called to mind, and we are naturally led to refer the traditions connected with it to a common origin. On the later Assyrian embroideries, as it has already been observed, the lotus frequently takes the place of the honeysuckle, both as a sacred emblem carried by the winged figures, and as an ornament in architecture and in embroideries. I have attrib-

uted the change to a close connection with Egypt."—*Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. ii, p. 472. It will be observed, that the juxtaposition of these sacred trees with winged or cherubic figures is a further proof of their paradisiacal origin.

Disinterred cylinders from Babylon and Syria, evidently of extremely ancient date, present undeniable combinations, similar to those found on the sculptures of Assyria. The sacred tree is found repeatedly in a very prominent position, and in close connection with winged figures and sacrificial observances.

Persia affords numerous similar traditional memorials of the sacred tree; from which, according to the fables of this country, the first pair were produced, and fell by eating forbidden fruit. At the resurrection the body will be restored to life, according to the faith of ancient Persia, by drinking the juice of the herb *hom*; while the *Dabistan* (vol. iii, p. 158) celebrates the *tuba* as "a celestial tree which sends branches into every corner of heaven;" and this tree, we are told, is like a sun to the inhabitants of heaven.

We are further informed that, "according to the commentators of the Koran, this *tuba* is a word derived from the Ethiopian language, and means properly 'eternal beatitude.' The *tuba*, as the lotus-tree, or tree of life, occurs in all mythologies; in the Chinese, Indian, Persian, Egyptian, and Scandinavian. This tree is represented upon the coffin of a mummy which exists in the imperial cabinet of Vienna: a deity pours out from its branches the paradisiacal fountain, which, according to the Mohammedans, issues from the tree of life." (See *The Mines of Orient*, vol. v.)

Similar prominence is given to this sacred tree in the mythology of the Scandinavians. Here it was celebrated as the sacred ash. Numerous theories have been based on this singular myth; but with these we have no concern. It will be sufficient to glance at the most important features ascribed to this wonderful tree; and these will be enough to convince



every Biblical student, that the original of this mythic representation was the tree of life. Let it be observed, then, the tree was fabled to have three roots; one in heaven, another on earth, and a third in hell. Each of these roots had a fountain issuing from under it. This tree was regarded as intimately connected with the life of man. It was sprinkled with water of matchless purity. Three much-knowing maidens sat under its branches: their vocation was to record events in Runic letters on tablets. They laid down laws, determined the lives of men, and fixed human destiny. The tree was encompassed by four rivers, so that Thor, the mediator deity, had to wade through them every day to reach it. Under this tree the gods met every day in council. It is the greatest and best of all trees; its branches spread over the whole world, and even reach above heaven. Snakes constantly gnaw its roots, under which, we are told, there are three distinct habitations. Hela (Death) dwells under one; the frost-giants, who had their being from the congealed venom of the rivers of hell, and who were opposed to gods and men, dwelt under the second; while mortal men resided under the third. Lastly, the wife of *Brage*, the god of eloquence and poetry, was said to have had the care of certain apples, which the gods tasted whenever they felt the approach of old age, and were thereby instantly restored to youth. (See the *Eddas*, *Voluspa*, and *Mallett's Northern Antiquities*, *passim*.)

It is freely admitted, that these traditions present a crude and rather redundant appearance, and that some of them are sufficiently extravagant; but while allowing all this it is manifest that we have not mistaken their direct reference to the subject under consideration. Here is the most excellent of all trees, connected with earth, heaven, and hell, accompanied by serpents, and associated with man's life and destiny, and also with the mediator deity, with death residing under one of its roots, while malign spirits and mortal man inhabit the neighborhood of the others. Other traditions of these coun-

tries tell us of life-giving fruit, which is necessary to be eaten in order to preserve the gods from the effects of old age. Have we not here every element of information, and an indication of almost every circumstance connected with the tree of life? The manner in which these traditions come before us is sufficiently accounted for, by the distance of time and space between the paradisiacal period, and the era when they were produced; and also by the rude and uncultured character of the northern tribes.

Attention is now directed to those traditions of the Hindoos which relate to this subject. Here, it is true, we do not find much that is definite and decisive; yet we can discover enough to leave no doubt of designed allusion to the tree of life.

When, according to these traditions, the *Vedas* were lost, and the miserable circumstances of the world required an incarnation of Vishnu to remedy existing disorders, the ocean was churned, and, among other invaluable objects attained by this singular process, we are told was the *parijati* tree, which had the marvelous power of producing spontaneously every thing that was desired. This tree was taken to heaven, where it was highly prized by the queen of the gods, who obtained from thence delightful ornaments, while it spread the sweetest perfume all around. At length, however, the great *avatar* of Vishnu occurred, in which he appeared as Krishna, in the form of mortal man, on the earth. Then it is said the *parijati* tree was forcibly taken by him from heaven, to bloom on the earth during the whole period of his incarnate life. At length, when Krishna, mortally wounded, "abandoned his mortal body," and attained the highest divine elevation, this sacred tree was again taken to heaven, and the dark Kala age descended on the world. (*Wilson's Translation of the Vishnu Purana*, pp. 76, 586, 613.) Here also are found circumstances sufficiently numerous and distinct to identify the *parijati* with its evident prototype, the Edenic tree of life.

The Druids of Britain entertained similar views, and cele-

brated the oak, as exhibiting in the liveliest manner the attributes of Deity. It was spoken of by them as omnipotent and self-existent, defying the assaults of a past eternity, and looking on to a future one as only equal to itself in duration. But the oak was not only regarded as the sacred tree of the Britons. If we may believe the testimony of many eminent authorities, they had appended a new idea to the ancient notions that prevailed respecting the tree of life.

"The Druids," says Pliny, "hold nothing more sacred than the mistletoe, and the tree on which it is produced, provided it be the oak. They make choice of groves of oaks on their own account, nor do they perform any of their sacred rites without the leaves of these trees; so that one may suppose that they are for this reason called, by a Greek etymology, 'Druids.' And whatever mistletoe grows on the oak they think *is sent from heaven*, and is a sign that God himself has chosen that tree. This, however, is very rarely found, but, when discovered, is treated with great ceremony. They call it by a name which, in their language, signifies, *the curer of all ills*; and having duly prepared their feasts and sacrifices under the tree, they bring to it two white bulls, whose horns are then, for the first time, tied. The priest, dressed in a white robe, ascends the tree, and with a golden pruning-hook cuts off the mistletoe, which is received in a white *sagum* or sheet. Then they sacrifice the victims, praying that God would bless *his own gift* to those on whom he has bestowed it."—*Natural History*, lib. xvii, cap. 44.

In this account there is something exceedingly remarkable. Not only does it speak of a *branch*, which is regarded as divine, and as the curer of all ills, but this branch is described as of a different nature from the tree, something extraneous to it, but which has nevertheless been brought into vital connection with it, and derived its size and substance from that connection. There can be no question but that all these circumstances very aptly set forth the human nature of the

DIVINE SON, who became man's Saviour. But can we believe that in ancient times, even before the coming of Christ, there was sufficient light in the world to induce an adoption of this figure, as symbolical of the manner of his coming? So many truly learned men certainly have believed. One who has investigated the subject with great learning and ability, does not hesitate to say: "We shall find, if I mistake not, that all this beautiful story of the *branch* had its source originally in several traditions relative to the expected Saviour of the world, of whom the tree of life in paradise was a striking emblem."—*Bridges's Testimony of Profane Antiquity*.

And on this subject another Biblical critic adds: "One would deem it hardly possible for a Christian to read this account without thinking of him who was *the Desire of all nations*; of the Man whose name was BRANCH, who had indeed no father upon earth, but came down from heaven, was given to heal our ills, and for this purpose cut off by the Divine counsel."

A careful and extended inquiry, which our limits forbid, would go far to make this apparent allusion certain. We know that Abraham and other patriarchs worshiped beneath the oak, that Romulus made an asylum between two groves of oaks, (*Dionysius Halicarnassus*, lib. ii, chap. 15,) and that Virgil describes Æneas as securing the golden, or rather *glorious branch*, without which no one could safely enter into the paradisiacal bliss of Elysium. The religious rites, sacred places, and mythology of the ancients are full of such allusions to sacred trees, and to the sacred branch. And if this truth is properly recognized, we shall see a meaning and force in the prophecies of Isaiah, (xi, 1,) of Jeremiah, (xxiii, 5,) and Zechariah, (iii, 8; vi, 12,) which cannot otherwise be perceived; and not only so, it will then be seen that these prophecies would be readily understood in the ancient world. Hebrews and Gentiles would instantly catch the idea, which was, indeed, a ruling element in all their religious systems, although it seems so strange to us, that we have to labor to attain it.

Another truth bearing on this subject may here be mentioned. The palm was everywhere regarded as a symbol of the tree of life, and the olive of the tree of knowledge; and, as such, these trees were almost always found in the sacred places of the ancients. On this account branches of the palm were always regarded as the brightest symbols of victory, indicating that possession of the tree of life had been secured; and hence, also, the olive was sacred to Minerva, the goddess of wisdom. We have a very curious proof of the early prevalence of these ideas in Plutarch. He tells us that the god Bacchus was born between two fountains, called respectively Palm and Olive, at the foot of Mount Delos in Bœotia, and not, as he says, between two trees; the truth being that, in this sacred place, there had been a palm and an olive, representing the two trees of Eden, growing by these fountains, and that the latter retained these names even in the time of Plutarch, long after the trees had perished.

A remembrance of this fact will enable us to see a point and beauty in several passages of Scripture which cannot otherwise be perceived. It is thus when David says, "The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree." Psalm xcii, 12. And the multitude of the faithful before the throne "had palms in their hands." Rev. vii, 9. And in allusion to the high and holy instruction which he realized in the sanctuary of God, the Psalmist says, "I am like a green-olive tree in the house of God." Psalm lii, 8.

We thus find the most abundant proof that everywhere the tree of life was remembered, and perpetuated by traditions, imitations, and memorials. The design of these was unquestionably to keep in remembrance one of the most wonderful events in the history of humanity; namely, the fact of man's having had access to the tree of life in paradise. But influential as this motive might have been, it does not account for the institutions and usages which prevailed among the ancients



respecting the tree of life. In numerous cases we find allusions to the destruction of the enemy by the promised Divine Son, and the consequent recovery of access to the sacred tree. This, indeed, is the ruling element of the religion and religious traditions and institutions of antiquity. All looked and aimed at a restoration to paradise, and pointed to a recovery of access to the tree of life.

We proceed, then, to direct attention—

II. To the tree of life in its antitypical reality, as the abiding source of immortal life and blessing to the redeemed.

It may be most suitable to observe here, that the human spirit requires, in order to its continued enjoyment and happiness, communications of spiritual blessing from God, as the Author of its being and the Fountain of immortal life. The spirit of man has no independent existence any more than his body. But while the death and ruin of the animal system is disorganization and dissolution, the death and misery of a soul consists in its alienation from God; so that for man's highest and most important, because spiritual and immortal, nature, intercourse and communion with God, and the spiritual sustenance which is thence derived, are essential to that religious well-being which we are accustomed to speak of as "spiritual life."

This being the case, we have in the means necessary to sustain the body in health and strength, the most lively representation of the means required to sustain the soul in happiness and spiritual vigor. As nutriment acts on the body, so do communications of Divine influence affect the soul. As without food the body faints, so without supplies of strength from God the soul languishes. This being the case, when we consider the circumstances in which mankind were placed immediately after their creation, it may be fairly supposed that this analogy between the means of sustaining the two parts of our compound nature was understood and appreciated. Probably, indeed, this analogy was wisely and benevolently appointed by

the Creator for the benefit of man in every state in which he may be found.

We have not, however, now to contemplate man in paradise, eating the fruit of the tree of life, and living in holy communion with God ; but, on the contrary, to regard him as a sinner, expelled from the garden and the tree, lying under the condemnation of sin, but sustained by the promise of redemption. How, then, are the gracious promises of this scheme of mercy applied to his case ?

In paradise, while he obeyed God, he ate the fruit of the tree of life. His eating of this fruit, therefore, was something more than a counteraction of the tendencies of his nature to decay ; it was a pledge of his innocence and intercourse with God. Whether, in any further respects, it was made the instrument of spiritual blessing, we do not know, and will not speculate on ; but thus far we may certainly go, that the eating of this life-sustaining fruit was a proof of man's innocence, a pledge of his communion with God.

Yet now, as a sinner, although he is expelled from the garden, means are appointed "to keep the way of the tree of life." Not to continue his access to the material tree in Eden ; for he was driven from the garden for the express purpose of excluding him from it ; yet the way of the tree of life was to be maintained. How was it done ? This is a most important question, and one which is by no means free from difficulty ; yet more encumbered with difficulty by notions and opinions which have been brought to the subject, than by anything fairly found in it. Guided by all the analogies of the case, we may conclude that the way of the tree of life to man expelled from the garden as a sinner, must be the same as the means by which man as a sinner may come to God, and obtain pardoning mercy, be restored to spiritual health, and be prepared for immortal glory. What the tree of life was to man in his state of purity, such means of grace are to man as a sinner. What, then, are these means ?

Holy Scripture, immediately bearing upon the subject before us, gives the most explicit information on this head. We are told that Abel brought, as an offering unto the Lord, "the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering." Gen. iv, 4. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh." Heb. xi, 4. Have we not, in these passages, a plain description of the means referred to? Abel brought an animal offering unto God; he killed this animal in humble acknowledgment that his own sins deserved the punishment of death; he presented the blood of this victim to God as a representation and type of that blood which was to be shed when the promised Saviour should be bruised for the sin of the world; and he ate a part of the flesh of this immolated victim, in faithful confidence that God would accept him, and minister life to his soul, as this animal flesh invigorated and sustained his body. And these means were effectual. The favor of God, which sin had destroyed, was restored to the mind of Abel, the righteousness which he needed was given, and with these blessings he had, by special communication from God, a knowledge of his altered condition, a certain experience of acceptance with him.

Is not this happy change just precisely what might be indicated in a promised restoration to the tree of life? Was not Abel thus brought into a condition as near to that from which Adam fell, as it was possible for one to experience whose soul had been brought under the dominion of sin, and whose body was doomed to die? Adam, standing before the tree of life, possessed a conscious purity and joy in the Divine favor, and knew that, while he remained obedient, he would continue in this happiness. Abel also felt assured that he had obtained righteousness by faith; he also rejoiced in the Divine favor, and knew that, retaining these, he would ultimately be saved

into the enjoyment of heaven, of which the earthly paradise and tree of life were but faint and shadowy types. We see, then, in the case of Abel, a clear proof of the correct meaning of the early part of man's history; his experience affords a full exposition of the sense in which we should understand the words, "to keep the way of the tree of life."

Nor had Abel any peculiar or elect privileges which were not common to mankind. It has been shown in the preceding discourses, that the rites of sacrifice must have been divinely appointed immediately after the fall; that, with it, there was made a wrathful and a gracious display of the Divine presence—a fire of wrath against sin, a shekinah glory on the cherubim, opening up a propitiatory to penitent sinners. It has been also shown, that by these means a new way of access to God was opened through the redemption of the great Saviour, by which righteousness and the Divine favor might be obtained on earth, and the heavenly paradise and the tree of life be secured hereafter. This was realized in Abel, and "by it he being dead yet speaketh."

In the consideration of this subject, we must not overlook the significant fact, that the external and visible means of life were essentially the same both before and after the fall, and consisted in eating. Under the first dispensation, the fruit of the tree of life was eaten; under the second, the flesh of the animal victim. The first suited a state of innocence; the second was peculiarly adapted to the condition of a sinner, to whom no life could come but through the vicarious death of sacrifice.

By these means the way of the tree of life was kept open to the world. And Enoch and Noah, and unquestionably many more, accepted the gracious provision, and realized the salvation which was offered. It is worthy of observation that this way of life was distinguished, and its significance greatly enhanced, throughout the antediluvian period, by the fact that animal flesh was not allowed to man as ordinary food. For

these two thousand years no flesh but that offered in sacrifice was, according to the Divine law, permitted to be eaten.

After the deluge God allowed animal flesh to be eaten as the ordinary food of mankind ; although a special reservation was made of the blood, which, on account of its being "the life," and therefore the essential element of sacrifice, was in every case to be scrupulously avoided, and never to be eaten. (Gen. ix, 2-6.) Nevertheless, the mode of coming to God by sacrifice was continued, and Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and others came, as Abel had done, and, like him, found acceptance and salvation.

When the Mosaic ritual was introduced, a law was enacted which brought the elect people back to the regulation which we have no doubt was in operation in antediluvian times. While the Hebrews were in the wilderness, and each man was consequently within reach of the sanctuary, it was the established law, that no man should kill an animal for food, unless he brought it to the door of the sanctuary to present its blood on the altar of sacrifice ; and that every violation of this rule should be punished with death. (Lev. xvii, 2-4.) When the Israelites took possession of the promised land, this law was relaxed ; but the prohibition respecting the blood was insisted on with the greatest force. Just before the Hebrews crossed the Jordan, they were told : "If the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to put his name there be too far from thee, then thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which the Lord hath given thee. Only be sure that thou eat not the blood : for the blood is the life ; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh. Thou shalt not eat it ; thou shalt pour it upon the earth as water." Deut. xii, 21-24. Thus those Hebrews who were led by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and the numerous spiritual influences of their dispensation, to seek deliverance from the evil of sin, and to secure the favor of God, worshiped during the whole period that the Mosaic economy was in force ; and thus was spiritual and soul-renew-



ing religion maintained in the world from the days of Abel to the time of Christ.

At length Messiah came, who, in fact, was the great object and end of all promise and prophecy, type and figure. His teaching, miracles, passion, and death, glorious resurrection, and ascension, not only illustrated and confirmed all previous revelations, but brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel. Christ, as the great sacrifice for sin, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, was the great antitype of all the animal sacrifices that had been offered. Their use and object was to set forth his one great efficient offering. All the virtue derived from them was obtained by faith in him. It becomes, then, an important inquiry, Do the teaching and death of Christ afford us any further information respecting sacrifice, as affording a way of access unto God instead of the tree of life?

We have in the teaching of Christ very important information respecting the great end of his death, and its bearing upon the subject of our inquiry. Jesus said to his hearers: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." John vi, 51, 53-55.

We regard these emphatic assertions of the Saviour as affording very explicit and valuable instruction on the nature and means of sacrificial efficacy. They show most clearly that a part of the animal offered must be eaten by the offerer, in order to his deriving advantage from the oblation. Nothing can exceed the strength and positiveness with which this is asserted. Even in the case of Christ himself, we are assured that his giving "his flesh for the life of the world" avails

nothing of itself; for, "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you." Now, surely, if something equivalent to this must take place in order to render this great sacrifice available, eating the flesh of animal sacrifice must have made an essential part of the religious rite. Unless this had been an admitted fact among the hearers of Christ, they could not have understood his language. But we find they raised no difficulty as to the doctrine of sacrifice which he propounded; they simply demurred to the possibility of his carrying it out in his own person: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" So far, then, as this remarkable language bears on the doctrine of sacrifice, it fully confirms the views we have advanced on the subject.

But what are we to understand by eating the flesh of the Son of Man? Are we so carnal and so slow of spiritual discernment as to ask, with the unbelieving Jews, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" The answer to this question is easy and decisive. In the midst of this discourse, in which Christ so strongly insists on the necessity of eating his flesh, he says: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life." As, then, eating the flesh of Christ, and believing in Christ, produced the same results, they must mean the same thing, and, of course, the figurative expression must be explained by the literal; so that Christ here teaches the necessity of a simple spiritual faith in his sacrificial death, in order to personal salvation. And this we know to be the constant tenor of apostolic doctrine. "By grace are ye saved through faith." Eph. ii, 8. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Heb. xi, 6. "A man is justified by faith." Rom. iii, 28. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts xvi, 31. "Whom God had set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." Rom. iii, 25. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." John iii, 36.

This exposition, while it fully explains the language of the Saviour, affords a great confirmation to the views we have propounded above on the efficacy of sacrifice. If Christ meant believing in him as the Lamb of God dying for the sin of the world, why did he speak of eating his flesh? The answer is obvious. Eating the flesh of the sacrificed victim had, in all past time, been the most significant expression of faith in its life-giving efficacy; the Saviour therefore spoke to the Jews in a manner which conveyed the truth he intended to express with the greatest force to their understandings. It asserted in the strongest possible terms that he was the appointed sacrifice for the sin of the world; a saying which their unbelief rejected.

This sacrifice, however, was offered; multitudes believed on him to salvation; multitudes have, in every age since then, received spiritual life and blessing by faith in him; and this process of saving grace will proceed on its way until the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea, and all shall know him from the least unto the greatest.

But this glorious reign of grace does not reach the scene of which our text speaks. This portion of the holy writ contemplates all these glorious promises as accomplished, the awful realities of the general judgment as past, every enemy and opposer of the mediatorial reign of Christ as cast into the pit of destruction, and all the redeemed, with their souls saved from impurity, and their bodies rescued from the ruins of the grave, as translated into the glory of heaven, and placed in the full fruition of the infinite and everlasting joy which is appointed as their final reward. Yes, our text passes over all these intermediate wonders, and informs us what then shall be the portion of the saved, when their redemption is thus gloriously consummated: then, to them, it is said, "will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

What, then, are we to infer from this? that even when safely entered into heaven, the redeemed will still be dependent, will

still need support? Most certainly we are taught this in the text, and, thank God, more than this. We are taught that those happy subjects of entire redemption shall enjoy the most glorious revelations of Divine good, the most perfect blessedness of which their nature is capable. To them "will I give," said the Saviour, certainly, continually, fully, "to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

The least these words imply is, that all that was lost in Adam is regained in Christ. The garden of delights, with its living streams and tree, are lost to man on earth, but they are restored to the redeemed in glory. There we are told of the paradise of God, with trees of life, and rivers of the water of life. All, therefore, that Satan and sin had done to ruin man is undone, and our nature is gloriously redeemed, fully saved. More than this, indeed, is done. In the earthly paradise there was the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Every time the first man came to the tree of life, he saw before him the means of knowing evil. There was the fruit by which, through disobedience, he might at any time fall into ruin. It is not so in heaven. That tree has perished from the scene; man is now perfectly happy, and forever safe.

But we do not, of course, take these representations literally. In Eden there was a garden, with trees and fountains, a literal earthly paradise; we do not expect this in heaven. No, these typical things on earth afford a dim shadow only of the blessedness of heavenly glory. "When the assurance is given to sincere believers, not only of a paradise for their abode, but also of a tree of life for their participation, they are thereby certified of all that may be needed for the perpetual refreshment of their glorified natures. These shall certainly require no such carnal sustenance as was provided for Adam in Eden; they shall be cast in another mold. But, as they shall still be material frame-works, they must have a certain dependence on the material elements around them for the possession of a healthful and blessed existence. The internal and the external,

the personal and the relative, shall be in harmonious and fitting adjustment to each other. All hunger shall be satisfied, and all thirst forever quenched. The inhabitant shall never say, 'I am sick.' And like the river itself, which flows in perennial fullness from the throne of God, the well-spring of life in the redeemed shall never know interruption or decay." —*Fairbairn's Typology*, vol. i, p. 220.

What, then, is the source of this sufficient and everlasting supply of every needful blessing to the redeemed? Our text informs us: "I will give him to eat." It is Christ, the eternal Word; he who walked and talked with the first pair, and led them to the tree of life, in the paradise of Eden; he who was the great antitype of every sacrifice that was offered and eaten, from the fall to the incarnation; he who was the bread of life that came down from heaven, and who gave his flesh for the life of the world. It is this Divine person, a partaker of our humanity, and our victorious Saviour, who, in the heavenly paradise, is the all-sufficient support of the redeemed; the true tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God.

Let us consider the aspect in which these views and facts exhibit the whole economy of grace.

Man, in a state of innocence, was placed in an earthly garden; and, as he needed temporal and spiritual support to sustain his compound nature, he had free access to the tree of life, which afforded him all he required. He was seduced into sin, and was immediately expelled from the tree of life, but permitted to come to God, and receive favor and spiritual life through the means of animal sacrifice, a part of which was always eaten. The great Redeemer came to work out man's redemption; but he came as the bread of life, to give his flesh, as that of the great atoning sacrifice, for the life of the world. The economy of grace proceeded, and penitent believers by faith feed on this divinely appointed sacrifice, and live. Even in heaven, while sin remained on earth, the Redeemer was seen on the propitiatory as the "Lamb as it



had been slain." Rev. v, 6. But when the redeeming process is completed, and sin and Satan are cast into their own place, and no human being is found resisting the Divine will; when, in fact, the mediatorial reign is terminated, and even "the last enemy, death," is destroyed; then we see no more of sacrifice, we hear no more of animal oblation, or of a participation in flesh; then the mode of support suited to sinless humanity is restored, and man again feeds on the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

Does not this condensed exhibition of the whole subject cast a flood of light on the great scheme of redemption? We perceive here how the whole economy of grace was ordered by Him who saw the end from the beginning. Man was so created that he might be redeemed. Christ was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The earthly paradise, in which man was placed on the morning of his existence, was a type of the habitation in which he is called to spend a glorious eternity. The tree of life below was a feeble and faint, but a true representation of man's incarnate Redeemer, who is to be the everlasting source of his being and blessing in heavenly glory. And this is no new exhibition of the Son of God. Typically through the flesh of sacrifice, or by faith under the glorious sunlight of Gospel blessing, he has been the life of the world from the beginning. No sooner was man driven from paradise, through his sin, than a new way of life was opened, which was intended to issue in his attainment of the glorious consummation which we have now considered.

With this broad view of the subject before us, can any one hesitate to admit the correctness of our interpretation of the words we have so often referred to: "to keep the way of the tree of life?" Where in the whole economy of redemption do we find a place for these words in the sense of exclusion, frowning off, a shutting up of the way? No, the Divine Spirit, who dictated these terms to the sacred writer, saw, not only man's present humiliation, but also his ultimate and glorious

destiny. The process of redemption, which was at that time introduced, was designed to supply, by really efficient means of recovery and restoration, the want which had been created. And these means were designed, notwithstanding the obstructions which sin had caused, to maintain, preserve, and perpetuate "the way of the tree of life."

How successfully and gloriously this work was accomplished, the case before us fully shows.

We find man innocent and happy in paradise, and see him surrounded by every means necessary to his continued purity and enjoyment; and we may, perhaps, fairly presume that, if he had continued innocent, he would have progressed in felicity; although this is nowhere distinctly stated; nor are we informed of any appliance having been provided for terminating his state of probation, and raising him to heavenly glory. This might have been done, but we have no certainty on the subject; much less have we any information respecting the means of its accomplishment, or the extent to which human elevation could have been carried.

But man sinned; Satan triumphed; sin reigned unto death; and it is scarcely possible to exaggerate the ruin, misery, disgrace, and woe, which followed as the consequences of man's transgression. His soul became "earthly, sensual, devilish," and his body, the seat of corruption and loathsome disease, was doomed to death and the grave; while the power of Satan seemed to be established, and he spread his baneful influence over mankind, and reigned as "the god of this world." Who can estimate the infinite dishonor done to God? Who can gauge the depth of ruin in which man was thus involved? What is to be the issue of this fearful crisis?

We have it before us. A way of life was opened, not to bring man back to the earthly paradise; that was a triumph too poor for the dignity of his Redeemer. A way of life was opened, not to arrest the destiny of man as it respected his mortal existence; for the sentence had gone forth, "Dust thou

art, and unto dust shalt thou return;" nor to lower the demands of Heaven's law, and bring down the purity of the divine requirement to the level of corrupted human capacity. No; a way of life was opened which upheld in honor the attributes and law of God, which recognized the infinite demerit and evil of sin, but which, nevertheless, provided for man a free, a full, and a present salvation.

We have endeavored, in the preceding discourses, to illustrate the great peculiarities of this way, and the harmony which subsists between them: we have here to consider the grand result. Man is saved, sin is forgiven, and its very nature purged from the soul; and the spirit, which was vile, corrupt, and depraved, is made "meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light." Man dies, but his corrupt dust is preserved and raised: "They that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and come forth." And this purified soul and this resuscitated body are re-united, so as to make the same individual self which lived and acted on earth, and then, "changed like unto the glorious body" of the Redeemer, this saved, renewed, redeemed man is translated to the highest heaven, and placed forever before the throne of God.

Can anything be greater or more glorious than this salvation? In what is said hitherto its highest honor is not mentioned. Man is saved by an incarnate Redeemer: God and man became mysteriously united in one Person to work out man's deliverance. The culminating point of this work was to make an atonement for sin: this the God-Man did by bearing "our sins in his own body on the tree." "He died for us;" and as this was the crowning act of the Redeemer's work, so a believing reception of Christ as our atonement is the turning-point of a sinner's salvation. It was this that was symbolized by the eating of the flesh of sacrifice; it was this that Christ so emphatically insisted on: "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

What, then, is the immediate result of this saving faith? What is the principle of this everlasting life? and how is it permanently maintained? These are most important questions; but we cannot go at length into the vital doctrines which the replies to them involve. It is necessary, however, to give brief explanations of these very essential points.

The immediate result of this saving faith is acceptance, justification, or pardon. The believing soul appropriates the merits of Christ's passion and death, and is "justified from all things," and rejoices in the pardoning mercy of the Lord. Forgiveness of "sins that are past" is not, however, the only, or, perhaps we might say, the principal blessing realized by this faith. Our nature is renewed: we are "born again, created anew in Christ Jesus," and are thus "passed from death unto life."

The principle of this "spiritual life" is undoubtedly the indwelling Spirit of Christ. One of the most important questions ever raised in this world was that put to our Redeemer by Judas: "How is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the world?" The reply to this question unfolds the nature of the spiritual life of the believer in Christ: "If any man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." John xiv, 23. Hence the apostle preached "Christ in you the hope of glory," and strongly insisted, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." This glorious privilege was symbolized in preceding dispensations by the shekinah inhabiting the cherubim, and is significantly set forth in the "living creatures" of prophecy.

Man, therefore, when raised to heavenly glory, as perfectly redeemed, is not merely pardoned, and renewed, and saved from all the evil and influence of sin, and all the ruin of death and the grave; he is made a partaker of Divine life, as we have shown in a preceding discourse. This is his glory, his highest elevation and honor. "When Christ, who is our life,

shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." Every redeemed human being, therefore, in the heavenly world is not only alive—he possesses not only a physical and rational existence as the gift of God—lives not only as a creature of God, as angels do—but has an indwelling God as the center and principle of his spiritual life. In their heavenly state, therefore, the saints present some remote analogy to their incarnate Redeemer. In him the Divine and human natures are mysteriously and perpetually united. In them the Saviour's presence is their indwelling and everlasting life. Christ therefore sustains, preserves, and perpetuates the heavenly felicity and well-being of the redeemed. He gives them "to eat of the tree of life."

This is the culminating point of the glory of the Redeemer. Nothing we have heard on earth, nothing that has been revealed from heaven, affords any parallel to this glorious state. Man, raised not merely to fellowship with, and likeness to God, but also into living union with him; man, brought from the threshold of hell to a state of heavenly glory, in which an indwelling God is his heavenly life! We are familiar with these terms, but who can gauge the depth of their meaning? Who can conceive their vast range of import? Yet this is that of which the cherubim, bathed in Divine glory, were a type, which our Christian life on earth feebly and faintly sets forth; the same, indeed, in principle; for we have everlasting life: but when all of sin, and of the results of sin, are removed, when everything earthly is destroyed, and man is translated to heaven, allied by natural and indestructible affinity to the God-man, everlastingly enjoying, in all its glorious reality and plenitude, a spiritual life which is not only the gift of God, but the immediate result of an indwelling God, who can speak of an elevation so grand, so glorious? "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive;" "It doth not yet appear what we shall be."



One thing, however, is thus placed before us with unmistakable clearness. It is the perfect success which has crowned the interposition of the Redeemer. If he had brought back erring humanity to the garden of Eden, and given it to enter upon a new course of access to the two trees in the midst of the garden, the deliverance from the power of Satan, and the restoration of man from ruin, would have been glorious. But what is this, when compared to the glory before us? Adam in Eden, innocent and happy as he was, could not live without coming into immediate contact with that which might effect his ruin. To the tree of life he must go, but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil stood by its side. He could not, therefore, seclude himself in a corner, he could not remain far away from the test of his obedience. But in heaven there is no tree of the knowledge of good and evil. There is no tempter, no test; the tree of life stands, and the river of the water of life rolls, free from the possibility of evil, imparting a joy and a life as far above all that Eden could give, as heaven is higher than earth. In the earthly paradise man was happy, because he was a holy and innocent creature of God: in heaven his very life is essentially Divine. On earth the Word of God, as his Creator and Preserver, led him to the tree of life: in heaven the same Divine person is his Elder Brother, is Himself his life, his love, his all-sufficient and everlasting fountain of blessing. But we cease: the glory of which our text speaks is so transcendent, that no language can reach its height, no earthly analogies can illustrate its meaning.

III. We proceed, then, to inquire, to whom this unspeakable measure of blessing is to be imparted.

The language of the promise is: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life." "To him that *overcometh*," how vast the meaning comprised in this one word; on it hinges the destiny of all mankind! We see here, at

the very close of the canon, when our Redeemer is speaking of the final and glorious reward of the redeemed, that his language is in perfect agreement with the very first promise that was ever uttered in reference to offending humanity: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." This promise was fulfilled; "the light which lighteneth every man" was given; "the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men;" the true nature of sin has been shown to man's conscience, and an opposition to Satan, as man's destroyer, been raised in man's heart. On this foundation our text proceeds, and says: "To him that overcometh" in this struggle, the heavenly tree of life shall be given.

What are we to understand by this language? Certainly not that man can, by his own merit or power, break through the evils and enemies by which he is encompassed, and work out a deliverance for himself. This is impossible. The Ethiopian can more easily change his skin, and the leopard remove his spots, than depraved and guilty man, by his own energy or power, can purify his nature, and render himself acceptable to God. We cannot, therefore, understand the *overcoming* in this sense. Let us, then, endeavor to show what the term in this connection really means.

The first and lowest sense we attach to this expression is, that it implies an entire submission of the mind to that spiritual influence which is given to work in every mind an enmity to Satan and to sin. Whenever this gift is received, the influence of Satan, as a strong man armed, is exerted to crush the gracious power, and to quench the Spirit in this merciful operation. And strange and melancholy as the truth is, it is true, that generally the utmost efforts of the human mind are put forth in opposition to the work of grace, and in aid of the destroyer. When the nature of sin is disclosed to the mind, its evil and danger made manifest by Divine light imparted to the soul, instead of fleeing from sin as from the face of a

serpent, often, on the contrary, sin is cherished and practiced, and men plunge more deeply into it, in order to stifle the influence which has troubled them; and thus those who are offered liberty become more than ever the slaves of Satan, and show themselves to be his seed, "doing the works of their father the devil." Now this is not the character spoken of in the text. Such are not the victors, but the vanquished. Let us regard this as a most undoubted fact. Those in whose hearts the love of sin is destroyed, the power of sin broken, the practice of sin regarded as the greatest evil and calamity, are those who overcome. This is the starting-point, the first step to victory. The practice of sin is therefore the badge of subjection to Satan, the proof of man's vassalage and defeat.

We may advance a step further. In order to overcome the wiles and power of Satan, it is not only necessary that we resist sin, and struggle against its influence with persevering energy; we must apprehend, and appropriate to our own personal need, the merit of our Redeemer's vicarious sacrifice. It is an invariable law in the kingdom of grace, that all sin must result in suffering. Sin and pain are connected as cause and effect. Left to ourselves, therefore, as surely as we have sinned we must suffer; and that suffering, we know, must be infinite and irremediable. The scheme of redemption presents the only remedy: Christ "suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." We may, therefore, instead of suffering in our own persons, place our sins in connection with the sufferings of our Redeemer, and thus obtain plenary deliverance from all the consequences of our transgression. Indeed, he suffered for this express purpose; for "by his stripes we are healed." As we have already shown, faith is the means by which this appropriation takes place. We are "justified by faith," and are made "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," and thus obtain deliverance from the guilt and power of sin. Have we received "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins?" Eph. i, 7. Has the great Redeemer

“washed us from our sins in his own blood?” Rev. i, 5. And have we, through him, “now received the atonement?” Rom. v, 11.

Let us not, however, even if it be so, regard the victory as fully achieved. Our career on earth is one of continued progress. Not only must the power and dominion of sin be broken, all sin must be destroyed. “For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” 1 John iii, 8. Now, all sin is undoubtedly the work of the devil; and to overcome fully is to have sin entirely destroyed. We do not wish to raise any dispute on words, but we do desire to place very strongly before our mind the glorious fact, that “the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from all sin;” and to urge on our hearts the attainment of this high privilege. This is true spiritual overcoming; and “to him that overcometh,” Christ says, “will I give to eat of the tree of life.”

We draw this our final discourse to a close, with a few observations referring to the harmony of all these dispensations of grace.

In doing this we may, in the first instance, call attention to the evident unity of design, which is so manifest in all the revelations of God to mankind.

Men of learning regard it not only as wise, but as necessary, that we should pursue our course of inquiry into the moral and religious circumstances of mankind by a regular course of induction from what is known of human history; holding that, in fact, we can only know what man is by what he does. To a certain extent this is true, as the tree is known by its fruits. But if religion is anything more than a name, its internal operation, and spiritual experience, can never be fully ascertained by induction. It is freely admitted that inward piety will be evinced by a corresponding outward purity of life. But there is much of spiritual feeling and purpose, very much

of the operation of grace on the heart, which can never be so discovered. In this respect, "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation." "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." There are, then, in the religion which God has prepared for the human family, grand spiritual truths, glorious religious privileges, which can never be clearly known, and fully understood, by any scrutiny of human conduct, by any investigation into individual or general history; which, indeed, can only be apprehended by a full recognition of the teaching of the word and Spirit of God, and an entire submission to their dictates.

Others, still calling themselves Christians, insist that man began his career in barbarism; and as to his religion it is said: "Fetichism is the adoration of material substances, and appears to have been the universal religion of the earliest inhabitants of the earth."

We notice these flagrant contradictions to the teaching of all revealed truth, not for the purpose of refuting them, but to show the contrast which is so evident between the views of human history which they afford, and those which result from the doctrines exhibited in these pages.

If we are to gather our knowledge of man's religion from his actions; if we are to assume as first principles, that he commenced his career in barbarism, and at first worshiped only material substances, what a collection of accidents, what a chapter of fragments is the history of the world! On these assumptions, we have no ruling element in man's career; no unity of design in the account given us of his character and destiny.

It is not thus in the view we have taken. Guided by the explicit teaching of the Divine word, we see in the creation of humanity an act of infinite benevolence. In man's primeval condition we perceive a full provision for every contingency



which could occur. Even his state of innocence is so contrived as to present a beautiful type of the more exalted blessedness which he is to obtain through redemption. The fall was therefore foreseen and provided for. The eternal counsel of heaven had prepared a remedy in the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Had not this been done, the first sinners could not have been the progenitors of the human race. But the career of redeeming mercy was coeval with human depravity; and every portion of man's subsequent history, all the various interpositions of Divine wisdom and power, the numerous religious institutions, miracles, prophecies, and means of grace, are all found in perfect harmony. Age after age passes in review before us, and nothing can be discovered contrary to the great purpose we have described, until every human being who has submitted to the sway of the Redeemer is led to "the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." In deprecating, therefore, a reliance on induction, it is not because the history of man is opposed to our views, but because man's history alone cannot fully make known his religion. It is delightful thus to contemplate the perfect harmony of the kingdom of grace in all ages.

We notice next in order the blessed efficacy of this scheme of mercy. Much has been said respecting the gradual development of the plan of redeeming grace; and undoubtedly there is a sense in which it is true that the display of revealed truth to the world was like the shining light, shining brighter and brighter until the perfect day of Gospel light and liberty was ushered in. But it is not true that those men who lived in ages most remote from the day of Christ had the least spiritual light, the most dim and shadowy perception of the way of salvation. On the contrary, we are disposed to believe that none who lived before Christ knew better the way of faith and salvation than Adam and his immediate posterity. Nothing has tended to diminish real religious light in this world so much as the obstinacy with which it has been resisted. Now, in the case of the first

families of mankind, this was not uniformly the case. Abel received the truth just at the fountain-head, and was obedient to the faith: Enoch talked with Shem and with Lamech, the father of Noah: so that, in those early days, religious light was transmitted through channels not likely to corrupt or dilute it. One thing, however, is certain: this truth was efficacious to save. In every age men obtained mercy, walked with God, and were made meet for heaven. And the terms in which the salvation thus attained is spoken of, are as strong in the case of Abel, Enoch, and Noah, as in that of any persons before the time of Christ; and it is clear, from the whole account, that the redemption, faith, and salvation of all ages are essentially the same.

If the views we have thus propounded are correct, it follows that all outward things are important only as they stand connected with spiritual realities. The cherubim and sacrifice of the antediluvians were, of themselves, without intrinsic value, even although appointed, and, indeed, probably prepared by the Lord himself. It was the same with all the ritual services of the Hebrews. Used as merely outward ordinances, they were "carnal," and without profit. Yet these were the things in which, it is to be feared, the multitude always trusted; relying on the mint, anise, and cummin, rather than aiming at the weightier matters of the law—judgment, mercy, and faith. It is so now. Men attach importance to forms, means, appearances, actions, and often look no further; when it is certain that, even if these are all right and proper, they can only be of use as they lead the soul to spiritual exercises, and bring the heart into communion with God.

Lastly, our whole subject issues in the establishment of one great and glorious truth, namely, that Christ is all and in all. Throughout the whole process of redemption he is "the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last." He walked and talked with the first man in the earthly paradise, and he will lead the last believer who shall quit this world to the tree of life in

heaven. We may contemplate the unnumbered sacrifices which have smoked on the altars of every age and nation ; and know of a certainty that Christ has been the only efficient object, the true and proper end of every one of them. Without ■ believing reference to him, they were all merely brutal slaughter, unmeaning and useless rites. We have seen the unity of all the dispensations of grace from the beginning ; and the reason is obvious : it was because Christ was the life, genius, and ruling principle of all. We have marked the perfect efficacy of all these vicarious means ; and the grand cause is, that Christ was in them all, the true object of faith, the living spirit of every one. Yes, Christ is “all and in all,” and, from the beginning to the end, the grand design of God in creation and redemption is to secure the world for Christ ; to lead human nature, in opposition to all the energies of hell, to the highest elevation of heavenly glory.

## A P P E N D I X.

---

### NOTE 1, p. 16.—*The Serpent Tempter.*

SCARCELY any part of Holy Scripture has been subjected to more captious criticism, and more direct hostility, than the account of the fall of man in the third chapter of Genesis. And, perhaps, for this very plain reason, that in the events here detailed we have the basis of all revealed religion. It is important, therefore, not only to assert distinctly and fully the doctrine of the fall, but to show that we have a plain and truthful account of it in this portion of Holy Scripture. For, as Bishop Horsley has observed, "it is difficult to conceive that any man can in good earnest believe the Gospel, who can find no vestige, in this third chapter of Genesis, of a seducing devil or a redeeming Saviour."

"It is remarkable," as the learned prelate goes on to say, "that in this history of the fall the seducer is never mentioned by any other name than that of 'the serpent;' nor is any intimation given, according to any of the versions, that a creature of another order lurked under the disguise of the serpent form; and this may afford no light objection to the literal acceptation of this history, which we would uphold, and upon which all our deductions from it depend. For if the serpent be an allegorical serpent, why may not every thing else, in this part of the history at least, be allegorical?"

"But to this we answer, First, The serpent was no allegory: it was the tempter in his proper person, in the form which he chose to assume, or assumed perhaps by necessity, being permitted to assume no better than that of a mean reptile. Still, in that form, he was the tempter in his own person, as much as if he had appeared, as painters draw him, with his horns, and tail, and cloven feet; and the narrative is not the less a plain narrative, to be literally taken, because it relates things as they passed, without any comment of the writer. Secondly, We answer that, although the tempter is called by no other name than that of 'the serpent,' it is not true that no intimation is given in the narrative that any other being lurked under the serpentine form. This is true only of the narrative as it appears in translations. In the original, we apprehend, so plain an intimation is given, in the very opening of the narrative, as rendered the mention of it again in any subsequent part, or the description of the tempter by any other name,

unnecessary; for the true rendering of the first verse of this third chapter would be in these words: 'Now *a certain* serpent was cunning beyond any beast of the field, which Jehovah God had made; and he said,' etc. 'A certain serpent,' הנחש. This is often the force of the prefixed ך, as Isai. vii, 14, הַעַלְמָה, 'A certain virgin shall conceive,' etc. Many more instances may be found in Noldius. It is not, therefore, the subtlety of the serpent kind that is in question. But the historian tells us, that 'a certain serpent' was cunning beyond any beast of the field, whether of the serpent or of any other kind. This 'certain serpent,' therefore, was no common serpent of the field; for he differed from them all. He could be no other than the apostate spirit, who, in the serpent form, executed his stratagem upon man; and to whom, for that exploit of wicked cunning, the name of 'the serpent,' and 'the old dragon,' has ever since been applied in derision and reproach. Hence it will follow, that the going upon the belly, and the eating of dust, in the malediction on the serpent, must be understood as applying to that 'certain serpent.' These are certainly figurative expressions, describing, in images taken from the life of the common serpent of the field, a state of degradation, and perpetual mortification of appetite, to which the deceiver stands condemned. Perhaps the condition of a spirit, whether in happiness or in misery, cannot be described to man otherwise than in figures; and such description is, in that case, as plain and literal as the nature of the subject will admit: and the use of such necessary figures, in a narrative of a transaction in which a created spirit bore so principal a part, can never be supposed to turn the whole substance of the narrative into allegory and fiction."—*Biblical Criticism*, vol. i., pp. 16–19.

The younger Rosenmüller supports the conclusions of the learned prelate, and observes, "that it was not a natural serpent that seduced Eve, but a wicked spirit, which had assumed the form of a serpent; and although Moses does not expressly say so, from the fear of affording a handle to superstition, yet it is probable that he designed to intimate as much, from the very fact of his introducing the serpent as a rational being, and speaking. Also that this opinion was universal among the nations of Central and Upper Asia, from the remotest antiquity, appears from this, that, in the system of Zoroaster, it is related that Ahriman, the chief of wicked spirits, seduced the first human beings to sin by putting on the form of a serpent." (*Schol. in Gen. iii. 1.* And he refers to Klenker's German version of the *Zendavesta*, and his own "Ancient and Modern Oriental Country.")

---

NOTE 2, p. 20.—*The Word of the Lord in Paradise.*

It is very important that we fully apprehend the exact meaning of the Holy Spirit in every part of this narrative. It becomes necessary, therefore, to establish the view which has been taken of this text: "And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." Gen. iii, 8. What do these words really mean? "The voice walking," is ■



very singular expression. Yet we cannot take exception to the translation: the word rendered "voice" is קוֹל, (*kol*), which strictly means "voice," while the word translated "walking" is the Hithpael participle of the verb which undoubtedly means "to walk." Difficult, however, as the text may be, one thing is clear: it was the sound of walking that was heard. The question, then, is, Who, or what, was heard walking? The notion which some commentators have propounded should here be noticed, namely, that they heard the voice of God sounding through Paradise, as if the Lord had spoken, and his words were heard passing through the garden. There are two fatal objections to this theory: First, Nothing had been said; Adam had not yet been called; God had not spoken. Secondly, Adam and his wife were not terrified by the sound of words; they hid themselves "from the presence of the Lord God." It was not the sound of words, therefore, of which the text speaks, but a personal appearance of the Lord, which was heard moving along by means of walking through the garden.

In the discussion of a question of this kind, it is very important to ascertain the meaning attached to the terms of the text by the ancient Hebrews. Fully understanding their own language, and uninfluenced by the conflicting views and doctrinal contests of later times, their judgment is most important. It is of consequence, therefore, to observe, that the Chaldee paraphrast renders this text, "And they heard the voice of the Word of the Lord walking in the garden." In perfect accordance with this version, all the Targums begin the next verse thus: "And the Word of the Lord called unto Adam." From this it is clear that the Jewish expositors regarded this text as speaking of a distinct and undoubted appearance of the Word of God, as if the terms, "voice of the Lord" and "Word of the Lord," were identical.

Nor is this rendering destitute of direct sanction from the sacred text, although the words are confessedly generally used in very different senses. For the word here rendered "voice" is employed no less than seven times in Psalm xxix, 3-9, under circumstances which make it equivalent to "the power of his word," or "the word of his power." Dr. Owen, therefore, concludes that the expression, "the voice of the Lord," in the passage under consideration, "may also denote *the Word of God, that is, God*; the essential Word of God, the person of his Son. For here our first parents heard this Word walking in the garden, before they heard the outward sound of any voice or word whatever. For God spake not unto them until after this: (Gen. iii, 9:) 'The Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him.'"—*Owen on the Hebrews*, vol. i, p. 216. Mr. Faber is of the same opinion: "What they heard, then, walking in the garden was a Divine person, styled *the Voice of Jehovah*: and there can be little doubt, I think, that this *Voice of Jehovah* is the same being as *the Word of Jehovah*, well known to the ancient Targumists by the appellation of *Mimra* or *Dabar*, and celebrated by Isaiah under the kindred title of *the Name of Jehovah*."—*Three Dispensations*, vol. i, p. 188.

NOTE 3, p. 21.—*The new Name given by Adam to his Wife.*

ON this text Dr. Adam Clarke observes: “‘And Adam called his wife’s name *Life*, because she was *the mother of all the living*.’ This is a proper and faithful representation of the Hebrew text; for the חַוָּה, *Chavah*, of the original, which we have corrupted into *Eve*, a word destitute of all meaning, answers exactly to the Ζωή of the Septuagint, both signifying ‘life;’ as does also the Hebrew חַי, *chai*, to the Greek ζώντων, both of which signify ‘the living.’” The learned doctor goes on to observe: “It is probable that God designed by this name to teach our first parents these two important truths: 1. That though they had merited immediate death, yet they should be respited, and the accomplishment of the sentence be long delayed: they should be spared to propagate a numerous progeny on earth. 2. That although much misery would be entailed on this posterity, and death should have a long and universal empire, yet ONE should, in the fulness of time, spring from the woman, who should destroy *death*, and bring *life* and *immortality* to light. (1 Tim. i, 10.) Therefore Adam called his wife’s name *Life*, because she was to be mother of all human beings, and because she was to be the mother of HIM who was to give life to a world dead in trespasses and dead in sins. (Eph. ii, 1, etc.)”

We have quoted the whole of this passage, because we think the translation which it affords to be perfect, and further, because it prominently sets forth the current but erroneous notion of reference to the natural motherhood of Eve. This same learned commentator, on Gen. ii, 23, observes: “The truth is, our term ‘woman’ is a proper and literal translation of the original; and we may thank the discernment of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors for giving it. *Wombman*, of which ‘woman’ is a contraction, means the *man with the womb*; a very appropriate version of the Hebrew יִשְׁשָׁק, *ishshah*, rendered by terms which signify ‘she-man’ in the version already specified.” So, then, although Adam, by the first name which he gave to his wife, most distinctly and emphatically set forth her sexual adaptation for the bearing of children, he also meant by the second name, given under such very peculiar circumstances, to teach just exactly the same fact as a primary truth!

This cannot be. The sex and consequent motherhood of the woman had been already distinctly recognized. Now Adam certainly acted on a believing recognition of the truths which he had just heard enunciated by the Word of the Lord, and gave his wife a new name, having no further reference to natural generation than concerned the great purposes of redemption. Therefore, as Dr. Clarke observes, the text does refer to her being the mother of HIM *who was to give life to a world*. And, consequently, through Him she became the mother of *all the living*; namely, of all those who, through faith in the great Redeemer, are made alive from the dead, being raised from the ruins of the fall into *newness of life*. Such are, in a preceding verse, (15,) called “the seed of the woman.”

This view is strongly supported by the learned Lightfoot, who says: “It ought not, also, to be passed by without observation, that Adam, receiving

from Him the promise of Christ, and believing it, named his wife 'Ohava,' that is, 'Life.' So the LXX: Καὶ ἐκάλεσεν Ἀδὰμ τὸ ὄνομα τῆς γυναίκος αὐτοῦ Ζωή. 'And Adam called his wife's name Life.' Gen. iii. 20. What! is she called 'Life' that brought in *death*? But Adam perceived the τὸν ἐσχατὸν Ἀδὰμ, 'the last Adam,' (exhibited to him in the promise, to be 'a quickening Spirit,') had brought in a better life of the soul, and at length should bring in a better life of the body. Hence is that, John i, 4: 'In Him was life.'—*Horæ Hebraicæ*, 1 Cor. xv, 45; see also *Kennicott's Three Dissertations*, p. 66.)

---

NOTE 4, p. 22.—*The Exclamation of Eve on the Birth of her first-born Son.*

WE are not content to allow the interpretation which is given in the text of this passage, to pass for a mere probable conjecture, or one of several meanings which the words may bear, but as the true sense, and the only one which the words, when fairly construed according to the acknowledged rules of Hebrew grammar, can be supposed to convey. In proof of this, we submit the following combination of reasons and authorities.

On this text Lightfoot observes: "Eve conceived and brought forth Cain, and said, 'I have possessed,' or 'obtained,' *a man, the Lord.*' That is, that the Lord himself should become man, for let me so term it, depending upon these reasons:

"I. That this interpretation is without any manner of wresting the particle *אֵל*; yea, it is according to its most proper signification and use.

"II. That, without doubt, Eve had respect to the promise of Christ, when she named her son; as Adam had respect to the promise in the denomination of Eve."—*Horæ Hebraicæ*, p. 555.

Another learned author says: "It is evident that Mother Eve herself understood that that SEED of the woman was to be God; for, being so forward as to think that the restoration from the Fall was to be performed immediately by her first-born, she cried out, immediately upon the birth of her first child, '*I have gotten that man which is Jehovah the Lord;*' or else, '*I have gotten that man from the Lord, who was promised to be the deliverer.*' Why our version reads it, '*I have gotten a man from the Lord,*' when the words will bear, and ought to bear, the other construction, I know not; for there is no doubt but Eve had regard to the promise of a Saviour, and therefore said she had obtained *that man the Jehovah*, that God, that Jehovah which should become man. And the Chaldee Paraphrase of Jonathan reads that verse thus: '*And Adam knew Eve his wife, who exceedingly longed for that angel (who was to restore them to happiness,) and she conceived and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten that man, that is the Angel of Jehovah.*'"—*De Gol's Vindication*, p. 107.

Allwood, in his "Twelve Lectures on the Prophecies," writes on this subject as follows: "It seems, indeed, as if our first parents had really expected,

that the illustrious person so foretold would have been possessed of a *Divine* nature under a *human* form. Upon the birth of her first child, Eve called his name Cain, which implies acquisition; for she said, 'I have gotten a person, *even* JEHOVAH.' I do not clearly see how our translation, in this verse, can be vindicated in rendering the particle  $\kappa\alpha\iota$  by the preposition *from*, a mode of construction it can never admit of, except when it is used with a verb that imports a *departure* or *proceeding forth from*; as in Gen. xliv, 4, which is the only instance of the kind I recollect. The LXX render the passage, 'Εκτηράμην ἄνθρωπον διὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, 'I have acquired ■ man, *because, or for the sake, of* God;' that is, *in consequence of his promise*; in which words the reference is obviously made to the Messiah. If the translator will have the word in this place to be a *preposition*, let him recollect that its most usual meaning, as such, is *with*; and then the exclamation of Eve will furnish us with what is nearly parallel with the name 'Emmanuel,' which St. Matthew interprets by 'God *with us*,' and which most undeniably relates to the same transcendent personage. But there does not, in reality, appear to be any sufficient reason why the word  $\kappa\alpha\iota$  should be at all considered as ■ *preposition* in this passage. Its most usual application is a *connective particle*, pointing out the relation between verbs active and the nouns which they respectively govern. In this sense it is used *twice* in the preceding parts of this very verse, and times almost without number throughout the Old Testament. Its next principal use is to connect nouns that are in opposition, and related to the same subject; and thus it is employed in the verse immediately succeeding the present, and in many other places, particularly in Genesis vi, 10. Its effect in these cases is, clearly, to render the sense more marked and emphatical; and to show that something of great import is to be annexed to the person or object before whom it is placed. In this respect, the instances here adduced bear a most evident and striking analogy to the passage before us; they are also the composition of the same inspired writer; they occur in almost contiguous parts of the same work, and were, therefore, as plainly as possible, intended to have been all interpreted in the same way. Standing in this connection, I should certainly be induced to render the words, 'And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain; and said, I have acquired a person, *even* Jehovah.'—Vol. i, p. 340.

We add but one more authority: "Eve, not knowing the precise time when the promised Seed was to appear, and doubtless very impatiently expecting his manifestation, exclaimed, we are told, on the birth of her first son, '*I have gotten* THE MAN, *even* JEHOVAH HIS VERY SELF.' From this language (for such is the literal rendering of the original) she seems, evidently, to have imagined that the promised Seed was *then* born into the world. But if such were her opinion, then, for some reason or other, she must have believed that the predicted MAN would also be JEHOVAH HIMSELF.

"Now, it is not easy to conceive how she came to use this singular language, if she had merely *conjectured* that the promised Seed *might possibly* be the Voice of Jehovah, who had revealed himself to her and to her hus-

band under the form of a MAN. The words import a degree of *positiveness*, which could only have been the result of some special revelation. Neither was it at all unnatural for her to imagine that she *herself* was to be the mother of the promised Seed: the terms of the prophecy, without a chronological exposition, would plainly, according to the first construction, lead to such an opinion. She seems, then, to have been informed as to the *character* of the predicted Deliverer, though nothing definite was revealed to her as to the time when he should appear."—*Faber's Three Dispensations*, vol. i, p. 203.

We have felt anxious to place before the reader the most ample proofs of the accuracy of the rendering given to this important passage in the text: it is, indeed, exceedingly important to a right understanding of this part of sacred history. And we hope it has been made fully apparent that Eve must have hailed the appearance of her first son as the promised Seed.

---

NOTE 5, p. 27.—*The Doctrine of the Incarnation.*

THE utmost efforts of the highest human intellect have never been so strenuously employed to repel and reject any proposed doctrine, as to repudiate and disprove the Scriptural tenet of the Divine and incarnate character of our Lord Jesus Christ. Whence, then, did it come to pass, that this very doctrine, at least in substance, namely, the direct union between Deity and human nature, pervaded all the heathen world? It is notorious that the kings of Assyria claimed to be representatives of the Deity on earth. It is equally certain that the sovereigns of Babylon claimed an equality with the Most High, (Isa. xiv, 13, 14;) that the kings of Persia were not allowed to be approached by any who would not worship them as divinities. The notion of Divine inhabitation of a human body has always been prevalent in the East, and even still subsists in the person of the Grand Lama of Thibet, who is revered as divine. Now whence could a notion so opposed to all the analogies of our nature, and all the dictates of our reason, have arisen? We think the source of this tenet must have been the primitive promise of an incarnate Redeemer. Our surmise is certainly strongly supported by the manner in which the principal mythological characters who have been regarded as incarnations of Deity are brought under our notice. The first of these is the Indian deity Chrishna, who, after having become incarnate six times under various forms, was afterward, on three several occasions, revealed in human nature. In the last of these incarnations he was the famous Budha, the founder of the religion known by that name, and which probably, during the past two thousand years, has prevailed more widely than any other, having filled China, Thibet, Japan, Siam, Ceylon, and the Birman Empire.

Thor, the great mediator-deity of the Scandinavians, clearly holds a similar position. As he was the first-born son of the supreme god, "the first



and principal intelligence proceeding from the union of the deity with matter, they have made him a middle divinity, a mediator between God and man. He enters into conflict with the great serpent, a monster descended from the evil principle, who is at enmity with gods and men; but he will not be able perfectly to triumph over him till the last day, when, recoiling back nine paces, he strikes him dead with his thunder, and destroys him for ever; but at the same time he falls dead on the spot, suffocated by the floods of venom which the serpent vomits forth upon him."—*Mallet's Northern Antiquities*, pp. 41, 119, 99.

The classical mythology presents us with another, among many instances, in the case of Hercules. He also was a son of the supreme deity, and by a human mother. He strangled two serpents, which were sent to destroy him, while in his cradle. He was called Σωτήρ, or "the Saviour," and he is represented on a remarkable antique coin as standing by a fruit-tree, around which a serpent is entwined; but the serpent's head is crushed, and hanging down, as if dead: Hercules has a club in his hand.

Numerous other instances might be cited to show that the general prevalence of the doctrine of Divine incarnation certainly fixes its origin in the earliest ages; while the manner in which many of these incarnations are related, clearly identifies them with the primitive promise of a Redeemer.

NOTE 6, p. 27.—*The predicted Suffering of the Woman's Seed.*

THE word which is here employed by the sacred writer, שָׁוֹף, *shoof*, is a very remarkable term, and is found but four times in the whole Bible; and two of these are in the verse before us. We have therefore very limited means of ascertaining with precision the true and proper sense of the verb, which in these two most important texts is rendered "bruise." In the other places it is thus rendered: "For *he breaketh me* with a tempest," Job ix, 17; "Surely the darkness shall *cover me*," Psalm cxxxix, 11. The meaning, therefore, seems to be "to cover, or overwhelm, as with a tempest or darkness."

NOTE 7, p. 40.—*"Behold, man is become as one of us."*

THIS text has been very differently rendered by the learned. In its ordinary and literal sense it is not true. Man, instead of having become like God, had sunk into a state of ruin; and hence the utmost ingenuity has been exerted to find a consistent sense of the terms. To effect this, some have read the clause interrogatively, thus: "Behold, is the man become as one of us?" This, although not a direct departure from the original Hebrew, presents an appearance of unnatural violence. Where else do we read, "Be-

hold, is," etc.? Who would thus introduce an inquiry? Dr. Adam Clarke and some others, adopting another sense, have insisted on rendering the passage thus: "Behold the man who *was* like one of us." To this version there are several serious objections. Rosenmüller and others contend that such a rendering violates Hebrew grammar; but, not to dwell on this point, with this alteration the passage does not make a consistent sense. What does it assert? "Behold the man who was like one of us, to know good and evil: and now," etc. But the weightiest objection to this reading is, that it violates the scope of the account. Man had recently obtained his knowledge of good and evil from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It is evident, therefore, that it could not be his former, but his present state that is spoken of. It is clear, also, from the fact that action was now being taken on account of his altered condition. We are therefore led to adopt the sense given to the clause by Pfeiffer, Schulz, Boothroyd, and others, and which is found in the text.

---

NOTE 8, p. 44.—*Criticism on the Translation of Genesis iii, 24.*

WE always regret to differ from the authorized translation of the sacred text, which is, in general, so accurate, and so excellent. In this portion of Scripture, however, we find so much that is exceptionable in the rendering, that we are compelled to adopt an amended version. The original phrase rendered, "and he placed," is *וַיִּשָּׂא*, from *שָׂא*, "He, or it, abode, dwelt, inhabited, tabernacled." And as in this text it is found in the Hiphil or causation form of the verb, the sense is, "He caused the Cherubim to abide, dwell, or tabernacle" in this place, a meaning which is tersely and fully given in the text. It may not be usual to employ the term "tabernacled" in the sense of "housed;" but in this sense it seems exactly to give the idea of the original.

The words "flaming sword" give an unsatisfactory rendering of *לַחֵט הַחֶרֶב*. The first of these words signifies, *flaming, inflamed, burned up, set on fire*, in fact, sets forth the action, energy, or effects of fire. The other term is undoubtedly usually employed to signify "sword;" but, as an eminent Hebraist has observed, it "is applied to any destroying matter, to anything scorched or dried up; does not signify a sword as an arbitrary, unexpressive word; not as describing its shape, materials, or any other idea belonging to a sword; but as a destroying instrument." "*Gladius*, says Leigh, *cade vel a vastando, vel exiccando*. It signifies destruction, and a sword is said to devour; and in this all the lexicons agree, and usage justifies them."—*Julius Bate*. To the same effect Parkhurst observes: "This word, in Gen. iii, 24, should certainly be rendered by some term expressive of heat or burning." (*Sub voce*.) The terms clearly speak of a flame, and but one flame; and a flame which threatened destruction, or evidenced fierce anger. The following words in the text fully confirm this view. This flaming agent was not

wielded or brandished by any other power. The authorized version says, it "turned every way;" so that, according to this reading, it had the power of self-motion. The word, therefore, clearly means, "intense wrath," "fiery destruction," and "a sword," or weapon of death, as the means of such destruction. Here, then, as it was not a sword, but a fire, it seems most reasonable not to refer the expression to the assumed sword-like form of the flame, but rather to the cause and character of the fire, God's anger against sin, which sent it forth as the instrument of destruction.

But the word which has been taken to give a sense to the whole passage is here rendered "cherubims." This rendering is clearly incorrect: for "cherubim" is the plural form of the Hebrew; the *s* is therefore unnecessary and improper. This term in the original has the definite article before it, and it should therefore stand thus, "the cherubim." But what is the meaning of this phrase? No subject has had more attention, or called forth more violent controversy. The word כְּרֻב, "cherub," never occurs as a verb in the Hebrew language; and it may with confidence be asserted, that criticism has hitherto failed to elicit any useful information respecting the meaning of the passage from the etymology of this term. In the last century some very able Hebrew scholars contended that the cherubim were visible representations of the Divine nature. But if this were so, visible representations of God were commanded to be set up in the Hebrew sanctuary, notwithstanding the express prohibition of the law to the contrary. Others have supposed the cherubim here to have been angels, who were placed with a fiery sword to guard the way to the tree of life; and this opinion has very generally obtained. Yet there are, in our judgment, fatal objections to it. (1.) The term "cherub" is never clearly and certainly applied to angels, or to angelic nature, in Holy Scripture. (2.) If these cherubim were angels, we have golden images of angels placed on the ark of the covenant, although God had said, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath." (3.) As has been already observed, if this be the sense, we have a plurality of angels with one self-moving flame! There is, in fact, nothing to justify the adoption of the angelic theory; nor, we think, to invalidate the interpretation given in the text. שָׁמַר, *shamar*, the word here rendered "keep," has been made to minister to the incorrect rendering of the version before us, by the indefiniteness, the wide range of meaning in the English word by which it is represented. From this it has been inferred, that "to keep the way of the tree of life" is to prevent access to the tree. But surely, even with the laxity in which this term is used, it is scarcely proper to interpret "keeping the way of the tree of life," as meaning the closing up of that way. But whether this sense of the English word is admissible or not, the original word certainly does not bear this sense; it does not mean to shut up, to guard; but "to keep," in the sense of "to preserve, to maintain, to observe." We will give a few instances of the authorized translation of passages in which this term occurs in the precise form in which it is found in the text under consideration. "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it." Gen. ii, 15. "That

ye may *keep* the commandments of the Lord your God." Deut. iv, 2. "*To observe* to do all these commandments." Deut. xv, 5. "That thou mayest *keep* the law of the Lord." 1 Chron. xxii, 12. "By *taking heed* thereto according to thy word." Psalm cxix, 9. Are we to understand, then, that this term, which everywhere else means "to preserve, or maintain," here means "to destroy?" It should be observed, that it is not the "tree of life" that is said to be kept, but "to keep *the way of* the tree of life." Now is it possible that "to keep the way" is to close it up, to cut off all access? And is this said to be done by means of a verb which signifies "to keep," as Adam kept the garden, "to observe," as the commandments of God are to be observed, "to take heed to," as we are to take heed to the law of the Lord? Any such rendering must be clearly inadmissible. We may notice another word here, namely, קדם, *qedem*, which is rendered, "*at the east* of the garden." The meaning of this word is doubtful. The primary sense of the term is, undoubtedly, *priority, precedency, antiquity*. And so it is rendered in numerous passages: thus, "I go *forward*, but he is not there." Job xxiii, 8. "In their days, in the times *of old*." Psalm xlv, 1. "Thou hast beset me behind and *before*." Psalm cxxxix, 5. "The Syrians *before*, and the Philistines behind." Isa. ix, 12. There are undoubtedly many passages of Scripture in which this word certainly means "east, or eastward;" but we think the primary sense of the term most suitable here, and it is so rendered in the text. Although this does not materially affect the sense of the passage, we greatly doubt the correctness of the rendering of this term, the first time it occurs in the Bible. "The Lord God planted a garden *eastward* in Eden," does not, perhaps, give so correct a rendering of the original as, "The Lord God planted a garden *of old* in Eden." The latter gives time and place.

---

NOTE 9, p. 51.—*Criticism on the Translation of Genesis, iv, 7.*

WE shall endeavor here to place before the reader an abridgment of Mr. Faber's masterly reply to Davison, in which the version which we have adopted in the text is most clearly and fully established.

The turning point of this controversy is the meaning of the Hebrew word חַטָּאת, *chattath*, which in this text is translated "sin." Mr. Davison had asserted that the term primarily meant "sin;" and secondarily, "not precisely sin-offering, but *something for sin*, or some adjunct relative to it, as its price; whether that price be ransom or punishment." Now if this sense of the term can be maintained, then the sense of the text rendered, "sin lieth at the door," might refer figuratively or metaphorically to the punishment of sin, which, in consequence of his not doing well, was impending over Cain.

In reply to this, it is admitted that this term primarily means "sin;" but it is contended that its secondary sense is not vaguely "*something for sin*;" but strictly a *sin-offering*. As a very important doctrine hinges on the cor-

rect apprehension of the sense of this word, it is of consequence that a perfectly sound test be applied to determine its meaning. Mr. Faber complains that Mr. Davison has for this purpose given nothing but etymological conjecture, which does not meet the case; for, as Mr. Faber justly observes, the question is not, "what, on the acknowledged principle of *Hebraic ideality*, the word *abstractedly* may be thought capable of meaning; but the point is, what, *in well ascertained usage*, it actually DOES mean." In other words, it is not enough to show that the term may be thought capable of denoting *punishment for sin*; it must be shown, by absolute proof, that the word, as employed in Scripture, ACTUALLY does bear such a sense. This may, of course, be done by the production of a passage in which the term must mean *punishment for sin*, and cannot mean either *sin*, or *sin-offering*. Now this has been laboriously attempted, but the attempt has failed. The word in two or three passages is found translated in the authorized version, "the punishment of sin;" but on examination it appears that this rendering is neither necessary nor correct. We will give one of these instances to show their nature: "For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom." Lam. iv, 6. Here *chattath* is rendered "the punishment of the sin." But the question comes, Is this translation necessary? Mr. Faber contends that the passage may, with perfect consistency and good sense, be rendered: "For the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the sin of Sodom." Such passages, therefore, afford no proof that the term *chattath* is ever used in Scripture certainly to signify the *punishment of sin*.

Now that which cannot be done to prove such a secondary sense of the word, is abundantly supplied to prove that it is used to denote a sin-offering. In the Hebrew Scriptures we read of the blood of a *chattath*. (Exod. xxx, 13.) In the same Scriptures it is asserted that a sacrificed bullock is a *chattath*. (Exod. xxix, 14.) In the same Scriptures, again, we find the priest laying his hand on the head of a *chattath*. (Lev. iv, 29.) And still in the same Scriptures we have it asserted that a *chattath* may be eaten. (Lev. x, 17.) Now, that the word *chattath* primarily means sin, all are agreed. But it is quite clear that sin has no blood, that sin is not a sacrificed bullock, that sin is not a material substance upon which the priest can lay his hand, that sin is not a thing which is capable of being eaten. Therefore, when the word *chattath* is thus connected it clearly CANNOT denote sin. What then under such construction does it denote? Evidently it denotes a *sin-offering*; for, in truth, the word is utterly incapable of any other translation. Hence, by a perfectly legitimate and intelligible process, we demonstrate that the word *chattath*, which primarily denotes *sin*, MUST secondarily denote a *sin-offering*.

This investigation has elicited the singular fact, that there are two words in the Hebrew language whose primary signification is "sin and iniquity." Each of these words, besides the primary, has a secondary sense; but here the singularity of the case occurs: *chattath* in its secondary sense means a "sin-offering," and never "the punishment of sin;" while *avon* (generally translated "iniquity") in its secondary sense always means "the punishment



of sin," and never a "sin-offering." So that nothing can be more full and complete than the proof that the term *chattath* applies to a sin-offering.

This interpretation is further confirmed by the term which is rendered "lieth" in the authorized translation, and which we have rendered "couch-eth." On this point, also, Mr. Faber is equally satisfactory: "The word, which inadequately has been rendered 'lieth,' properly describes the couching or recumbence of an animal. Nor is this the only peculiarity of the clause, as it stands in the Hebrew. Contrary to the strict rules of grammar, the masculine participle *rabatz*, which expresses the act of *couching*, is constructed with the feminine substantive *chattath*, which by our translators is rendered 'sin.' Here, then, we have a double peculiarity—a peculiarity of *import* and a peculiarity of *grammar*; and each peculiarity alike directs us to the version for which I am contending.

"A participle which properly describes the *recumbence of an animal*, is employed simply because *an animal* is spoken of; and this participle is irregularly written in the masculine gender, because, agreeably to sacrificial practice, the animal pointed out to Cain was a *male*. By the version for which I contend, the difficulty is at once both explained and removed; or rather the difficulty is removed by the mere act of giving what I deem the true explanation of the passage. Though the word *chattath* itself be feminine, the animal which would have constituted the sin-offering enjoined upon Cain, was masculine. Hence, by a familiar involution of ideas, a masculine participle is joined to a feminine substantive, because the feminine substantive expresses a masculine victim. So that we are not only led to the version adopted in the text by concurring circumstances; it is demonstrably proved from the grammatical constitution of the sacred text." See *Faber's Origin of Primitive Sacrifice*, pp. 112–138. See also *Lightfoot*, vol. i, p. 13, *note*.

NOTE 10, p. 55.—*On Eating the Flesh of Animal Sacrifices.*

THE Jewish sacrifices were of three kinds: First, Such as were wholly offered up to God, and burnt upon his altar; generally called "holocausts," or "whole burnt-offerings." Secondly, Those wherein, besides something offered up to God on the altar, the priests had a portion, of which they and their families partook: these were called "sin-offerings," and "trespass-offerings." Thirdly, Those in which, besides something offered up to God, and a portion bestowed on the priests, the offerers themselves had a share likewise. These were called "peace-offerings." Those of the first class, when they were not offerings for the whole congregation, but for some particular family or person, had peace-offerings regularly annexed to them: so that the offerers might, at the same time when they presented their sacrifice, feast upon the dedicated flesh. The people therefore always, either by the priests as their proxies, or in their own persons, ate of the flesh of their sacrifices.

We may give some proofs, both from sacred and profane history, in support of the antiquity and general prevalence of this practice.

We have one instance in the portions of sacrificial meat sent by Elkanah to the several members of his family. (1 Sam. i, 3-5.) Another in the case of Samuel and Saul: "Before he go to the high place to eat: for the people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice." 1 Sam. ix, 13. Again, in the case of David: Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither." 1 Sam. xvi, 5-11. See also 1 Sam. ii, 13.

The same practice obtained among the ancient heathens. When Herodotus relates the celebrated story of Cleobis and Bito, he says: "When the succeeding sacrifice and festival were ended, the young men retired to rest."—*Clio*, xxxi. Homer, after minutely describing a Grecian sacrifice, says:

"Then spread the tables, and the feast prepare;  
Each takes his seat, and each receives his share."—*Iliad*, book i.

And again:

"With hasty feasts they sacrifice and pray,  
To' avert the dangers of the doubtful day."—*Iliad*, book ii.

And in the "Odyssey:"

"Suppliant he pray'd. And now, the victims dress'd,  
They draw, divide, and celebrate the feast."—Book iii.

Plato, in his book *De Legibus*, speaks of these sacrificial feasts as "feasts after divine worship." Strabo mentions a strange kind of worship used by the ancient Persians in their sacrifices, where no part of the flesh was offered to the gods, but all was eaten by those that brought it, and by their guests. Plutarch makes this eating of animal flesh such an essential part of sacrifice, that he says, when Catiline and his conspirators had sacrificed a man, for the purpose of cementing their treachery by a religious bond, "they did all eat somewhat of the flesh."

Our limits will not allow the citation of further evidence, but we must append the opinion of the learned Cudworth on the subject. "This practice," he says, "was so general [among the ancient heathens] in their idolatrous sacrifices, that Isaac Abarbanel, a learned Jew, observed it. In those ancient times, whoever sacrificed to idols made a feast upon the sacrifice. And the original of it among them was so ancient, that it is ascribed by their own authors to Prometheus, as Salmasius, in his *Solino-Plinian Exercitationes*, notes; which Prometheus, although, according to Eusebius's *Chronicon* and our ordinary chronologies, his time would fall near about the 3028th year of the Julian period, which was long after Noah; yet it is certain that he lived much sooner, near about Noah's time, in that he is made to be the son of Japhet, which was Noah's son, from whom the Europeans descended, called therefore by the poet, *Iapeti genus*; although I rather subscribe to the judgment of the learned Vossius, that this Prometheus was no other than

Noah himself, the father of Japhet, and not his son, because the other things do so well agree to him.”—*Cudworth's Works*, vol. iv, p. 286.

Yet, perhaps, nothing can more forcibly set forth the universality of this practice than the incidental allusion of the apostle: “We have an altar, whereof they have no right to *eat* which serve the tabernacle.” Heb. xiii, 10. From the antiquity and universality of this practice we are certainly warranted in inferring that it was an element in the primitive appointment of sacrifice, and, as we think, for the purpose mentioned in the text.

---

NOTE 11, p. 60.—*Critical Examination of Numbers, xxiv, 1.*

THE sense of this text must be determined by the meaning intended to be conveyed by the term נָחָשׁ, *nachash*, which is here used in the plural form, and translated “enchantments.”

It must be confessed that there is difficulty in ascertaining the signification of this word. Looking at the consonants composing it, apart from the vowel-points which have been attached to them, we find it represent different and apparently conflicting significations. It is well known, that the Old Testament is the only book which affords a key to the meaning of Hebrew words. In these sacred books, then, we find this term generally used as a name for a *serpent* or for the serpent tribe. We also find it used to denote the metals copper or brass. Again, we find it employed to represent divination or enchantment, and once or twice to signify careful scrutiny, or close and diligent observation.

It may seem that these data afford but little encouragement to our eliciting the strict sense which the word is intended to represent, in a difficult passage like that before us. A brief research, however, may cast some cheering light on the subject. The first sense of the word, in the order of time and in frequency of use, is *serpent*. It is employed in this sense in the early part of Genesis, and is oftener used to denote this meaning than any other. But it is also used to signify brass or copper. It has been very reasonably conjectured, that this secondary meaning was ascribed to the term, because the bright, burnished color of serpents greatly resembles the appearance of these metals. This is not mere conjecture; there is a singular instance which seems to confirm it. In the book of Numbers (xxi, 9) it is said, Moses made *nechash nechosheth*, “a serpent of brass,” the same word essentially being used to denote the serpent, and the brass of which it was made. But this is not all. This serpent was intended to represent the fiery serpents by which the Israelites had been destroyed. These serpents were called *sāh-rāhph*, “fiery or burning serpents.” The name was given these creatures probably on account of the intense brightness of their burning color; but it is certain this term, indicating a fiery appearance, was held sufficient to denote the serpent without any addition; for when the Lord told Moses to make a fiery serpent, he did not say *saraph nachash*, but simply *saraph*, ■

"burning one." But then, if we admit that this name was applied to brass on account of its bright or burnished appearance, why did it become associated with divination or enchantment? and what is its sense in the text before us? We think that the same reason which applied it to brass, namely, the bright, burnished appearance of the metal, caused it occasionally to be applied to those figures employed as memorials of the primitive way of access unto God in patriarchal times; and that the prostitution of these, after the introduction of idolatry, caused it to be associated with divination and enchantment. We will offer a word or two on each of these points.

It is certain that memorials, or imitations, of the paradisiacal cherubim were preserved and used for religious purposes by the patriarchs. It is equally certain that Laban kept such in his house, and for this purpose. They are called "images" in our version, (Gen. xxxi, 19;) but in the original, *teraphim*, which Dr. A. Clarke observes might be the same with *seraphim*, and says: "It has been conjectured that the *teraphim* of Laban were luminous forms of burnished brass, etc., which he might imagine a proper medium of communication between God and his worshipers." But why resort to this equivocal language, when this description is so evidently in harmony with the view given above, and when it is asserted in the sacred text that Laban certainly had oracular revelations from the Lord? (Gen. xxxi, 29.) Laban, as Mr. Parkhurst asserts, was no idolater; and this is proved by the narration. (Verses 49-55.) These *teraphim*, or *seraphim*, were, in accordance with the rites of the patriarchal faith, his way of access unto God, and the means of intercourse with him. We have remarkable proofs of this in the use of the term which we are now explaining, *nachash*. In the preceding chapter, when Jacob proposed to leave the service of Laban, the latter entreated him to stay, saying, according to our version, "*I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake.*" Gen. xxx, 27. We will not stay to object to the sense of this, as might be done, but proceed to notice the translation in respect of the original meaning. The reader will be surprised to hear, that this long phrase of five words is represented in the Hebrew by a form of the simple term *nachash*. Surely such a rendering cannot be approved or defended. Aben Ezra, so eminent for his knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures, believed that Laban had inquired of the Lord the cause of his rapid and unexampled prosperity, and had learned that he was blessed on Jacob's account: he consequently says, he knew this through the means of *the bright or burning ones* by whom he had access to the Divine presence. In the same sense the word is undoubtedly used in the narrative of Balaam. He had, as the text assures us, on the preceding occasions gone to meet the Lord in the use of those sacred emblems which he had brought with him; but now, weary of disappointing the king, and of defeating his own hopes, he turned away from the seat of the Divine presence, and went not as aforetime to "*the bright or burning ones.*" For the same reason that this name was applied to these figures, the term *sahrahph*, which was employed to designate the brazen serpent made and set upon a pole by Moses, is applied by Isaiah to the living cherubim in the sanctuary, in the description of his vision of the glory of Christ.

All this is further confirmed by the language of Ezekiel respecting the cherubim. Besides the glowing account which this prophet gives in his vision (Ezek. i, 10,) of these compounded figures, which then appeared to him instinct with life, he makes another allusion to them in their paradisiacal state, which proves the identity of the cherubic character from the beginning, and justifies the appellation of *bright* or *burning ones*, as a designation for them. Speaking in a lofty tone of irony of the King of Tyre, he says: "Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God: thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire." Ezek. xxviii, 13-16. From this language it seems clear that not only were figures in imitation of the primitive cherubim kept, but the effect of these was heightened in appearance by the use of gems and the highest art and skill.

After the introduction of idolatry, and the prostitution of these patriarchal memorials to profane purposes, the association of the term with divination and enchantment became natural. It was the same with teraphim, which were identical at first with these memorials, but were afterward spoken of as associated with all wickedness.

NOTE 12, p. 70.—*The Patriarchal Tabernacle, and Seat of the Divine Presence with the Hebrews, before the Giving of the Law.*

WE believe a satisfactory proof of the existence of an ante-Sinaitic tabernacle, and seat of the Divine presence among the Hebrews, may be furnished by placing in juxtaposition before the reader the prominent points of the narrative, from the vocation of Moses, to the giving of the law.

The first message taken by Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh strikingly displays the intercourse with God which the Hebrews claimed to enjoy. They "told Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness. And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go. And they said, The God of the Hebrews *hath called us to him*: let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the Lord our God; lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword." The authorized version says, "The God of the Hebrews *hath met us*," which is not a faithful rendering of the original, nor in agreement with the scope of the address. The translation given above is sanctioned by the Septuagint, and clearly shows that the Hebrews at this time had the most intimate verbal intercourse with Deity. The following proves that such intercourse generally took place in a given locality. When



Pharaoh, refusing to comply with the request of Moses, increased the burdens of the Israelites, and they reproached their leaders for having aggravated their misery, we are told that "Moses *returned* unto the Lord, and said," Exod. v, 22; a proof in itself that there was a recognized seat of the Divine presence. And so, in fact, is the whole account; for we read again: "And Moses spake before the Lord." Exod. vi, 12. "And he went out from Pharaoh, and entreated the Lord." Exod. x, 18. The continual intercourse thus expressed, clearly indicates a certain locality where the Lord was always found, and to which Moses "returned," and where he "spake before the Lord."

The narrative of events connected with and following the Exodus, fully confirms our view. During the whole of the preparations for this great event, we hear that "the Lord spake unto Moses" continually; as if Moses was in constant attendance on the Divine presence, except when he was engaged in executing his commissions to Pharaoh and to the Hebrews. When, however, the march of the Hebrews was begun, we are told that "God led the people about," Exod. xiii, 18; that "the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way," Exod. xiii, 21: this Divine person is called "the angel of God," Exod. xiv, 19; and he directs the way of the people by giving express commands to Moses. At Sin the people murmur against God and Moses; and all the congregation are then commanded to "come near before the Lord." Exod. xvi, 9. And so, when Moses had offered sacrifices on the arrival of Jethro, we are told that they, and Aaron, and the elders of Israel, did "eat bread before God." Exod. xviii, 12. All these phrases clearly indicate a local residence of the Divine presence, a place where Moses always knew where to find the Lord, to receive from him direction and command, or to pour on his ear the burden of his wants. This view is confirmed by the fact, that the tabernacle of the congregation evidently appears to have been the seat of the Divine presence, (Exod. xxix, 8 11,) and to have contained the testimony, where consecrated and sacred things were laid up before the Lord. (Exod. xvi, 34.) That this sanctuary, in its object and end, was identical with the Mosaic, is proved by their exact similarity in this particular. (See chap. xxxi, 7-9.)

NOTE 13, p. 73.—*The Cherubim and the Ark of the Covenant.*

IN a preceding lecture we endeavored to show that the Edenic cherubim were similar, in form and object, to the cherubim of the Hebrew sanctuary. We have now to furnish additional evidence in favor of this similarity; evidence which will go to prove that the Mosaic cherubim could not have been newly appointed representations of angels, or of angelic nature, but were certainly analogous to sacred figures, similar in form, which had been long in use.

The researches which have been recently made into the ancient history and sacred antiquities of Egypt, and other ancient nations, have cast important light on this topic. Sir J. G. Wilkinson, on this subject, observes: "One of

the most important ceremonies was 'the procession of shrines,' which is mentioned in the Rosetta Stone, and frequently occurs on the walls of the temples. The shrines were of two kinds: the one, a sort of canopy; the other, an ark or sacred boat, which may be termed 'the great shrine.' This was carried with grand pomp by the priests, a certain number being selected for that duty, who supported it on their shoulders by means of long staves, passing through metal rings at the side of the sledge on which it stood, and brought it into the temple, where it was deposited upon a stand or table, in order that the prescribed ceremonies might be discharged before it. The stand was also carried in possession by another set of priests, following the shrine, by means of similar staves; a method usually adopted for carrying large statues and sacred emblems, too heavy or too important to be borne by one person. The same is stated to have been the custom of the Jews, in some of their religious processions, (comp. 1 Chron. xv, 2, 15; 2 Sam. xv, 24; and Josh. iii, 12,) as in carrying the ark 'to its place, into the oracle of the house, in the most holy place,' when the temple was built by Solomon. (1 Kings viii, 6.)

"Some of the sacred boats, or arks, contained the emblems of life and stability, which, when the vail was drawn aside, were partially seen; and others presented the sacred beetle of the sun, overshadowed by two

figures of the goddess Thmei, or Truth, which calls to mind the cherubim of the Jews."—*Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians*, vol. v., pp. 271–275.

A careful consideration of the sculptures referred to above, as given in the work of this learned Egyptologist, will be sufficient to convince any observer that the resemblance of these figure to the Hebrew cherubim is real; and such as could only have been occasioned by an identity of origin. We find among them compounded winged figures in every variety.



Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.

To enable the reader to judge of this resemblance, we place the most important of these before him. Figures 1, 2, and 3, are representations of Isis.

Figures 4 and 5 represent a kind of winged canopy, constantly found in Egypt on the fronts of buildings, especially in sacred architecture. These hovering wings come very near to several Scriptural expressions regarded

as allusive to the cherubim. The sculptures of Babylon present the same kind of compound figures. Figure 6 is one of these found on



Figs. 4 and 5.



Fig. 6.

an antique gem of that country. Figure 7 is an engraving on a Babylonian cylinder, and is remarkable as presenting not only a human figure



Fig. 7.



Fig. 8.

with the wings, but also with the head of a bird. The monuments of ancient Persia are equally rich in cherubic resemblances. Figure 9 is one of these, in which we have a human figure arrayed in a richly embroidered robe, with ample horns (the well-known symbols of regal power) issuing from the head, and up-bearing a symbolical crown or mitre, such as is often seen on the heads of Egyptian gods and their ministering priests; besides which this figure has four wings, two rising on high above the head, the other pair descending and reaching to the feet, precisely as the cherubim are described by Ezekiel and Isaiah. Figure 9 is a hovering representation, generally regarded as showing forth the Divine Triad; but, like the Egyptian sphinx, remarkable for presenting in the human countenance the features of the reigning king.



Fig. 9.

The recently disinterred sculptures of Assyria also contain abundant representations of a similar kind. Figure 10 is a winged bull with a human head, thus presenting three out of the four component parts of the Scriptural cherubim. Figure 11 exhibits two winged human figures kneeling before the sacred tree. Besides these, numerous other examples might be cited; indeed, various modifications of cherubic forms pervade the sculptures of Assyria. Compound winged figures are ever connected with its worship, and especially with sacrifice. Every portal was guarded by them; they appear in almost endless ramifications; and as the likeness of the cherubim was wrought on the curtains of the tabernacle and on the hangings of the temple, so the royal robes of kings and high priests in Assyria were abundantly adorned with various adaptations of these figures. It will give the reader some idea of the prevalence of this element in Assyrian sculpture, to state that, of the one hundred plates contained in Layard's "Monuments of Nineveh," fully one fourth (twenty-five at least) contain compound figures of this kind. The connection subsisting between the Scriptural cherubim and the compound figures found in these several ancient nations, is not a mere conceit of the author, but a conclusion which has forced itself upon the judgment of all who have attentively considered the subject. Mr. Layard expresses himself strongly on the point. It is set forth at large in a learned paper read before the Royal Antiquarian Society by Mr. Ravenshaw, and is ably illustrated in the "Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature," articles *Ark* and *Cherubim*.

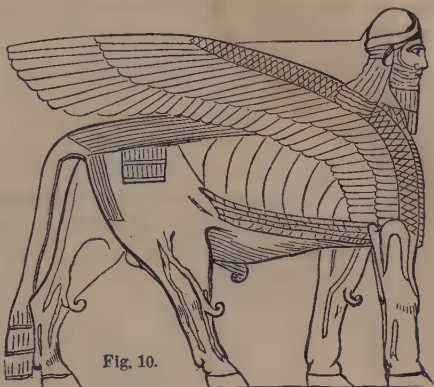


Fig. 10.



Fig. 11.

But if we are thus compelled to admit that some direct connection or relation subsisted between the cherubic figures of the Hebrews and the compound figures of ancient heathen countries, what is the inference fairly deducible from such a singular and important fact? Certainly not that the heathen copied these figures from Hebrew originals; for many of them, in Egypt for instance, were sculptured long before the Exodus. Nor that Moses copied his from the Egyptians; for symbols and types of spiritual and heavenly realities could not have had a heathen original. Besides, this theory fails to



account for the prevalence of the same figures throughout all the earliest nations of ancient Asia. What, then, is the solution of this singular problem? Just this: that cherubic figures and a sacred residence of the testimony existed from the time of the Fall; and that from thence they were imitated in the religion of every ancient nation; and, renewed, purified, and probably extended in their religious use, were perpetuated among the Hebrews by the direct command of God.

The origin of all these compound figures in the heathen world, and their ultimate issue in animal worship, have been recognized and set forth by the most eminent scholars of the present day. A late and very learned author, speaking on this subject, observes: "It is matter of very curious inquiry how mankind degenerated into the worship of animals and the abominations of idolatry. It will have been observed in the preceding remarks, that among the heathens the EAGLE was the token of the *ethereal power*; the LION of the *light*; and the BULL of *fire, heat*, or the *solar orb*; though these distinctions are not always very accurately maintained. These animals are, in fact, no other than the animals that composed the cherubim, which, in the Antediluvian, Patriarchal, and Jewish dispensations, were placed at the entrance of Paradise, and afterward upon the mercy-seat of the ark. They were deemed oracular; and above them rested the shekinah, the cloud of glory, the visible symbol of the presence of the Lord, who is represented as sitting between them, or flying upon them. The form of the cherubim was that of a bull, from which arose a human body, as a centaur, with four heads—that of a bull, of an eagle, of a lion, and of a man, with wings, and hands, and covered with eyes. In the heathen cherubim, the head of the serpent is often substituted for the human head. The seraphim are considered to have been similar; and the teraphim were of the same form, but smaller figures, which were set up by individuals in their own dwellings, and to which they resorted for answers. (Zech. viii, 21.)

"The cherubim constituted the place of worship for all believers; they were termed *penei Elohim*,\* 'the faces,' (Zech. vii, 2, *passim*,) or, 'presence of God;' and from between them issued oracles. (Exod. xxv. 22.) It would have been a singular omission of the heathen, as they went off from the patriarchal worship, had they not carried with them an institution so remarkable. Accordingly, we find the figures worked up into all their religious institutions, and the memory of them retained even to the present day. The cherubim may be found in every part of the heathen world; and to the abuse of them, I believe, may be traced the worship of animals."—*Cory's Mythological Inquiry*, pp. 90–104.

Although we do not quite agree with all that is stated by this learned author respecting the cherubic form, and some other points of minor interest, we regard the above extract as exhibiting most important and truthful views of the traduction of the compound figures of ancient sculpture, and the practice of animal worship, from the primitive cherubim. And it may be observed here in passing, that these views harmonize with some statements of ancient authors which have appeared, when regarded from other points of vision, foolish and absurd. As an instance, we refer to the account of Diodorus Siculus, who states that the worship of animals arose from the fact, that

\* The learned author errs in this reference; the words in the text are *penei Yehovah*.



in the early ages the gods dwelt on earth in animal forms. It is well known that throughout the Hebrew Scriptures the Deity is said to inhabit, or tabernacle in, the cherubim. And if this sentiment prevailed in patriarchal times, which is highly probable, we have, in the heathenish perversion of Diodorus, the same fact asserted as we have seen exhibited in the argument of Mr. Cory.

We have now to direct attention to the ark in connection with the cherubim. Sacred arks were well known in Egypt, and, ■ we have already shown, were of two kinds; or, rather, the ark and its appendages present to our view two or three separable and important parts. In Figure 1 we exhibit these making one whole. There is, first, the square chest, or stand; secondly, on this rests a sacred boat-like form; and this is surmounted by extended wings, forming ■ kind of canopy. Of these, the first seems to represent the primitive ark; the second, ■ commemorative reference to the preservation of the human family at the Deluge; and the third, the over-shadowing wings of the cherubim. But these are found strangely intermingled on the monuments of Egypt. Sometimes the chest-like form of the ark was all that appeared externally; while within was contained ■ small golden boat. In other cases, as in Figure 2, we find the sacred boat ■ the exterior form, containing within it the ark and cherubim.



Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.

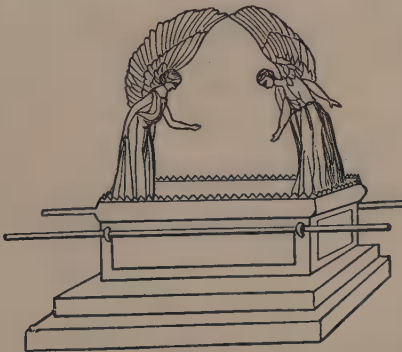


Fig. 3.



Fig. 4.

and that of ancient Egypt, a work already referred to has exhibited the most approved representations that have been given of the first, in juxtaposition with others, in which some of the compound figures, previously

referred to, are placed on some of the sacred arks of Egypt. Figure 3, for instance, exhibits a representation of the Hebrew ark and cherubim, drawn from the descriptions given in the sacred texts; while Figure 4 represents two Egyptian winged figures standing on the base of their sacred ark.

It seems, therefore, that the views we have advanced have, by these means, received all the confirmation and support which the nature of the case admits. The cherubim and the ark, in the Hebrew sanctuary, are found to be connected with the cherubim of Paradise, and the seat of the Divine presence there, by the entire current of Hebrew and Gentile archæology. The worship, traditions, and usages of every ancient people exhibit to us the presence of certain winged figures, and of curious emblems, which are, according to any other scheme of interpretation, fantastic and unmeaning; but which, on the principle here advocated, are perceived to be full of interest, as venerable, although perverted, remains of institutions which were divinely appointed immediately after the Fall, made an essential part of patriarchal religion, and thence passed into the mythology, traditions, and practices of the various primitive tribes.

NOTE 14, p. 78.—*The Appointment of the Hebrew Priests to conduct the several Parts of Public Worship.*

ACCORDING to Dr. Lightfoot, "early in the morning, the priests who had charge of the religious services of the day, assembled in a building appropriated to that purpose, to cast lots in order to decide who should be appointed to discharge the several particular duties which devolved on them as a whole.

"The first lot was to determine who should cleanse the altar of burnt-offering. He who was appointed to this duty left the others to proceed with the further allotment, and went immediately to his work. This began usually about the dawning of the day.

"Besides this initial operation, we are told there were thirteen others, which were allotted to as many priests. The person on whom the next lot falls kills the sacrifice; the next must take and sprinkle the blood; the others in order must cleanse the incense altar, dress the candlestick and lamps, bring the head and legs of the sacrifice to the rise of the altar, bring the two shoulders, bring the rump and the feet, bring the breast, weasand, plucks, the two loins, the inwards; then the meat-offering, the high priest's meat-offering; and lastly, the drink-offering."—*Temple Service*, chap. ix., sect. 1, 2.

NOTE 15, p. 106.—*The Tabernacle of David.*

THERE is scarcely any erroneous interpretation of Scripture, prevalent in modern times, which appears more extraordinary than the meanings which learned men have ascribed to this portion of holy writ.

The notion which has obtained credit and extensive currency from the authority of Bishop Lowth namely, that this is a prediction that the family of

David, which had, before the birth of Christ, "been reduced to a mean and obscure condition, shall now recover its ancient splendor and dignity," calls for more particular examination. And a very brief consideration of the subject will be sufficient to show the utter fallacy of this interpretation. This exposition does not give the true sense of the passage, because it is contrary to plain matter of fact, and contrary also to the general scope of sacred Scripture.

It is contrary to historical fact. When Christ appeared, was the family of David restored to its former "splendor and dignity?" On the contrary, the family remained as obscure as they had previously been. Jesus himself never assumed nor pretended to aim at any earthly rank, much less regal dignity. As regarded his worldly *status*, he stood no higher than the "carpenter's son." And his family remained among the peasantry of Judea, without any pretension to wealth, dignity, or power. So far, indeed, was the advent of the Messiah from restoring the family of David to its ancient "dignity and splendor," that it was the prelude to the entire ruin of the name, knowledge, and distinction of that family. From the days of Solomon to the time of Christ, the family of David was known and recognized among the Hebrew people. But after the death of Christ, and that of his immediate brethren, this family became unknown, so that afterward it was utterly impossible to find a single undoubted descendant of the son of Jesse. How then could the birth of Christ be regarded as synchronizing with the restoration of the *family* of David to "its ancient splendor and dignity?" It was rather precursory of its extinction. The family of David was maintained and preserved in the world for this very purpose,—to identify Jesus as the undoubted Messiah of God; and, having subverted this great purpose, its vocation was fulfilled, and it ceased to be known among men as a particular family.

But it may be said, that the meaning of the prophet and of the expositor is, that the elevation of Christ, as the Son of David, to the throne of God's mediatorial kingdom is spoken of as the restoration of the tabernacle or family of David.

To this it may be replied, that the prophets did not use language in this lax and indefinite manner. They did not speak of the elevation and kingdom of Christ as a restoration of the family of David to dignity and splendor. On the contrary, they used terms and figures of speech which set forth the case precisely as it occurred. Hence, Isaiah (xi, 1.) says: "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." This language does not place before us any idea of the restoration of the family of David. This family is merely described as not quite dead. The tree is cut down, nothing but the roots are left possessing life; and before this perishes, a rod, a branch, a single scion shall spring up and accomplish the benign purpose of God. Jeremiah (xxiii, 5) speaks in a similar manner: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth." Here, also, there is no reference to the restoration of the family; it is only a single branch that prospers and reigns. And we know well, that this reign had nothing whatever to do with the ancient

splendor and dignity of the royal line of David. The learned prelate's exposition of this prophecy is therefore altogether untenable.

---

NOTE 16, p. 109.—*The Authority under which David acted in building and worshipping in his Tabernacle.*

It becomes a very important question, whether, in this matter, David acted under divine illumination and direction, or carried out this purpose merely for the gratification of his own will. If we can possibly adopt the latter conclusion, the whole arrangement will appear to have been a most unwarrantable violation of Divine law. But it is not an easy task to approach this conclusion. It must be remembered, that at this period the Lord guarded most jealously the regulations which he had given to Moses respecting the ark of the covenant; and it is not to be supposed that he would destroy great numbers of men at Beth-shemesh for daring to look into the ark, that he would strike Uzzah dead for putting forth his hand to touch it, because it was an infraction of prescribed rule, and yet that he should have allowed David to effect an unauthorized arrangement by which the most sacred and solemn services of the Mosaic ritual were greatly altered for a space of more than thirty years. This was not only done, but David was prospered and blessed beyond all who preceded or followed him. Not, indeed, that success proves that the course adopted is the right one. This success, however, took place under very peculiar circumstances. David lived under a dispensation which promised, in a most emphatic manner, present and temporal blessing as the reward of obedience, and which threatened instant punishment on every violation of Divine law. Yet, under these circumstances, David adopted a course which involved for above thirty years a virtual suspension of the great day of atonement; and yet he prospered in his person, in his family, in his kingdom, and, what is more than all, in the religion of the heart, and in high and holy communion with God.

We have, indeed, nowhere in the Old Testament such a blessed display of spiritual religion as is found in the religious experience of David and of his companions who worshiped in this tabernacle on Mount Zion. How is this to be accounted for? Did the Lord distinguish with an especial mark of his favor a violation of his law, and a flagrant system of will-worship? and are its history, progress, and end narrated in the sacred volume without censure or even unpleasant reflection? And, more than all, is this unlawful and unjustifiable course of action referred to by holy prophets, and made by them, in their inspired communications, the basis and model of the worship and privileges of the Gospel of Christ? We know and feel that this is impossible; we are therefore conducted to the inevitable conclusion that David, in the whole matter of his tabernacle, acted under Divine influence and direction, and must be regarded as an inspired prophet and king, while making the arrangements for this extraordinary measure, and in all his connection with the religious services and worship of the tabernacle on Mount Zion.



NOTE 17, p. 115.—*The Difference between the Hebrew and the Septuagint Reading of Psalm xl. 6, 7.*

THE discerning reader will perceive that the version of this portion of Scripture which is given in the text, is materially different from that found in the authorized version of the Book of Psalms. There the sixth verse reads thus: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required." Between this reading and the words, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not; but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast no pleasure," there is the greatest possible difference. The latter version conveys a distinct and intelligible sense. It in fact says, that animal oblations did not meet the requirements of Divine justice in respect of the guilt of man, and that therefore God had prepared a body for his Son, in order that the claims of Divine justice might be fully met; while the former construction of the passage conveys scarcely any meaning, and, if it gives any, it is a very far-fetched and figurative one.

There are two questions, of some interest to the Biblical student, involved in this text. Which is the true reading? and, Whence originated this singular discrepancy?

As to the first point, there is very little difficulty. We do not by any means attach a higher degree of authority to the Septuagint than to the original Hebrew. On the contrary, we regard the latter as by far the most pure and trustworthy text of the Old Testament Scriptures.

But, nevertheless, when a quotation from the Old Testament in the New is found to give the exact words of the Septuagint version, when that differs from the Hebrew, we feel bound to adopt the rendering which is thus supported by New Testament authority. It does not seem reasonable to suppose that the inspired apostles of our Lord, when referring to the Old Testament writings, under the plenary guidance of the Holy Ghost, could be allowed to quote vitiated and corrupted texts, and use them for the purpose of illustrating or confirming the doctrines of the Gospel. Such, precisely, is the case before us. The exact words which are found in the Septuagint version of the Psalmist are given by the apostle, and cited by him as an ancient prophecy of the incarnation of the Son of God. We therefore have no doubt whatever, that they give a correct representation of the words as they came from the pen of the Psalmist.

Whence then came the present Hebrew text, which conveys such a very different sense? Dr. Kennicott, who has very learnedly investigated the subject, supposes that the present Hebrew text has been corrupted; and he shows how easily this might have been done, either by accident or design. The word *אזניך* *oznayim*, "ears," has taken the place of *אז גוה* *az ge'vah*, "then a body." It will be seen, the first syllable is the same in both, and the latter part differs so little that accident might have led to the error; or the later Jews, when their own Scriptures were quoted with so much force against them, and in support of the Christian cause, might have made



the alteration designedly, to wrest this important text from their adversaries. Justin Martyr and other early Christian fathers distinctly charged the Jews with this crime. If it were so, we plainly see the reason that they could not extend the corruption to the Septuagint; for while the Hebrew Bible was almost entirely in their own hands, and consequently in their own power, the Septuagint was largely distributed among the Christians and Gentiles. (See the "Patriarchal Age, pp. 27-32.)

---

NOTE 18, p. 216.—*The Efforts of Alexander to be recognized as the Son of Jupiter Ammon.*

DISTANCE of time and space, together with the changing manners of mankind, and the varying circumstances and sentiments of nations, renders it very difficult for us to appreciate, fairly and fully, such a case as that before us. To us the idea of a prince or king attempting to be regarded as a son of a deity, appears as a simple absurdity, so glaring in its character as to be immediately placed in the category of myth or fable. We, however, must not from hence conclude that it was so in all ages and countries.

In the case before us, the fact of Alexander's journey to the Oasis in the Ethiopian Desert is an unquestionable historical reality. Nor can it be supposed that a sovereign of Alexander's capacity would have undertaken such a journey without an adequate motive, and especially at such a period, when all his hope of success depended on the greatest possible promptitude.

Nor can any reasonable doubt be entertained as to the direct object of his journey. It was certainly, that he might be recognized as the proper son of Jupiter Ammon, the supreme deity of the Greeks. One of those casual circumstances which, from their natural and undesigned character, constitute the best historical proof, clearly shows that we have not mistaken the great Macedonian's object in this strange expedition. We are told that his "mother, Olympias, wrote to him in railery, not to set her and Juno by the ears;" words which would never have occurred to her mind, if the purpose of the journey had not been well known by his family.—*Abbe Millot's General History*, vol i, p. 300.

---

NOTE 19, p. 224.—*The Form of the Son of God.*

ON this subject we speak with great deference and reserve. We may, however, fairly inquire whether the words in the sacred text do not imply that some particular and well-known appearance was regarded in Babylon, at this period, as proper to the promised and expected Son of God? From what has been already said, there can be no doubt on this subject. As certainly as a Divine Son was expected as a sovereign Saviour and universal Prince, so certainly his form was sculptured on the sacred buildings and

historical records of this and other neighboring countries, encompassed with a circle, and sustained by wings. We refer to one or two of these representations, and, without expressing any opinion on the precise appearance made to Nebuchadnezzar, repeat, that it seems probable that, in some manner, this appearance had some similarity to these recognized forms, such as at once satisfied the astonished king that this Divine person was the Son of God.





THEOLOGY LIBRARY  
CLAREMONT, CALIF.



BS480 .S69 1856

Smith, George, 1800-1868.

The harmony of the divine dispensations

BS Smith, George, 1800-1868.  
480 The harmony of the divine dispensations;  
S69 being a series of discourses on select por-  
1856 tions of Holy Scripture ... 3d ed. New York,  
Carlton & Porter [1856?]  
319p. illus. 24cm.

1. Bible--Evidences, authority, etc.  
I. Title.

CCSC/mmb

178006

